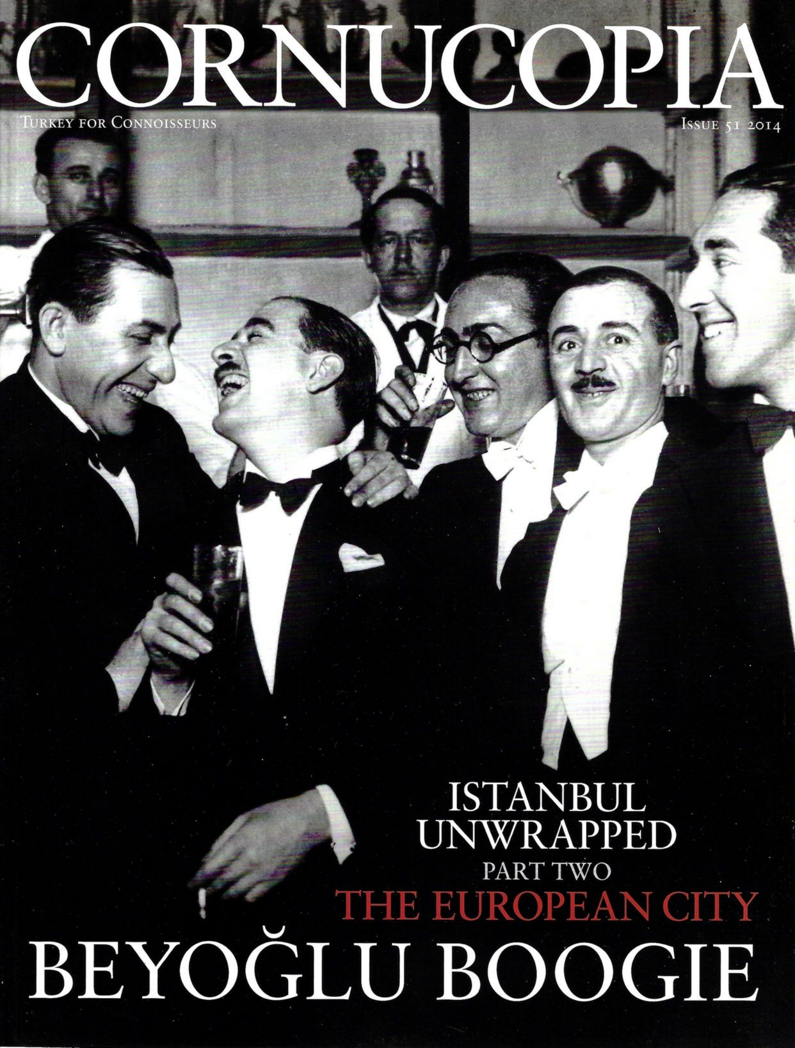


CORNUCOPIA

TURKEY FOR CONNOISSEURS

ISSUE 51 2014

ISTANBUL UNWRAPPED

PART TWO

THE EUROPEAN CITY

BEYOĞLU BOOGIE

GROS & DELETTREZ
Commissaires-Priseurs

ORIENTALISM

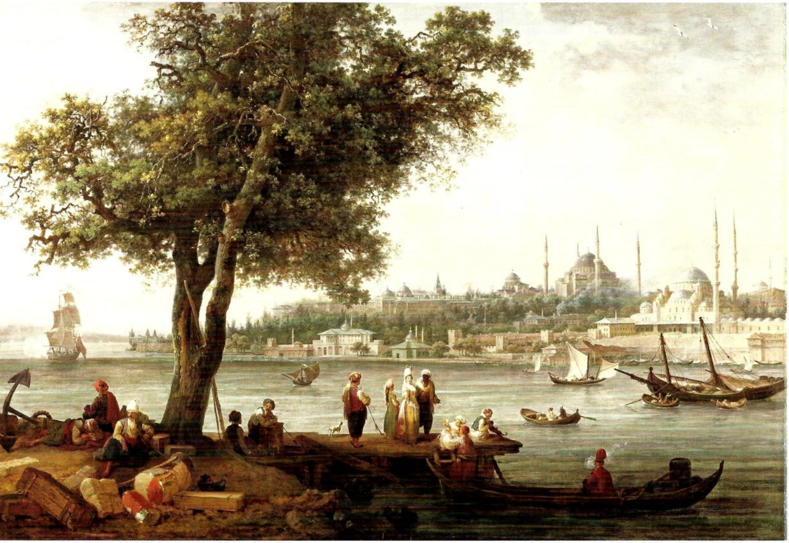
16th and 17th June 2014

HÔTEL DROUOT - *room 5, 6 and 9*
9, rue Drouot, 75009 Paris

AUCTIONEER :
Henri GROS
22, rue Drouot – 75009 Paris
Mob : + 33 (0)6 07 69 96 75
Tel. : + 33 (0)1 47 70 83 04
contact@gros-delettrez.com
www.gros-delettrez.com

EXPERT :
Frédérick CHANOIT
12, rue Drouot – 75009 Paris
Tel. / Fax : + 33 (0)1 47 70 22 33
frederic.chanoit@wanadoo.fr

Two masterpieces of ottoman orientalist painting by Jean-Baptiste Hilair



Jean-Baptiste HILAIR (1753-1822)
View of the Seraglio taken from Galata, Constantinople 1785
Oil on canvas, signed and dated lower left 1785. 83 x 125 cm
Literature : *Les Peintres du Bosphore au XVIIIe siècle*, A. BOPPE, ACR Edition, Paris, 1989, reproduced page 188.
Related work : *View of the gate of the Seraglio taken from Galata*, watercolor and bodycolor, 62 x 86 cm, reproduced Boppe page 198.

Estimate : 300 000 / 400 000 EUR

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Cover: Maxim's in the 1930s. See page 66. Photograph by Selahattın Giz ©Yapı Kredi Selahattin Giz Collection

YASTIK
By
RIFAT ÖZBEK

Çeşme - 1001 Sokak No 2, Alaçatı, +90-232 716 0280
Istanbul - Şakayık Sokak, Olcay Apt. No 29/1, Teşvikiye, +90-212 240 8731
London - 8 Holland Street, W8 4LT, +44 20 3538 7981

www.yastikbyrifatozbek.com

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PUBLISHING DIRECTOR
Berrin Torolsan

EDITOR
John Scott

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Clive Crook
ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Susana Raby Hilary Stafford-Clark
Tony Barrell Rose Shepherd
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Andrew Finkel David Barchard
Thomas Roueché
Designer
Kate Newman

CIRCULATION
Julie Witford

ADVERTISING
Daniel Hirtenstein Dayna Tellibayraktar
Online editor Roger Williams
Online arts diary Victoria Khroundina

www.cornucopia.net

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Subscriptions and back issues
www.cornucopia.net
Enquiries and address corrections:
subscriptions@cornucopia.net

Turkey
PK51, Teşvikiye, 34367 Istanbul
cornucopia@atlas.net.tr
Tel and fax +90-212 248 3607

United Kingdom
PO Box 13311, Hawick TD9 7YF, Scotland
subscriptions@cornucopia.net
Tel +44(0)1450 379933 Fax +44(0)1450 379988

USA and Canada
PO Box 5, Dundee, Oregon, OR 97115, USA
Tel +1 971 244 8802

Advertising
Tel +90-212 248 3607 or +44(0)1450 379933
Fax +44(0)1450 379988; adverts@cornucopia.net

THE ORIGINAL 'CORNUCOPIA'
The Latin *cornu copiæ* or 'horn of plenty', a horn overflowing with flowers, fruit and corn and a symbol of prosperity and abundance in the cities of Anatolia.

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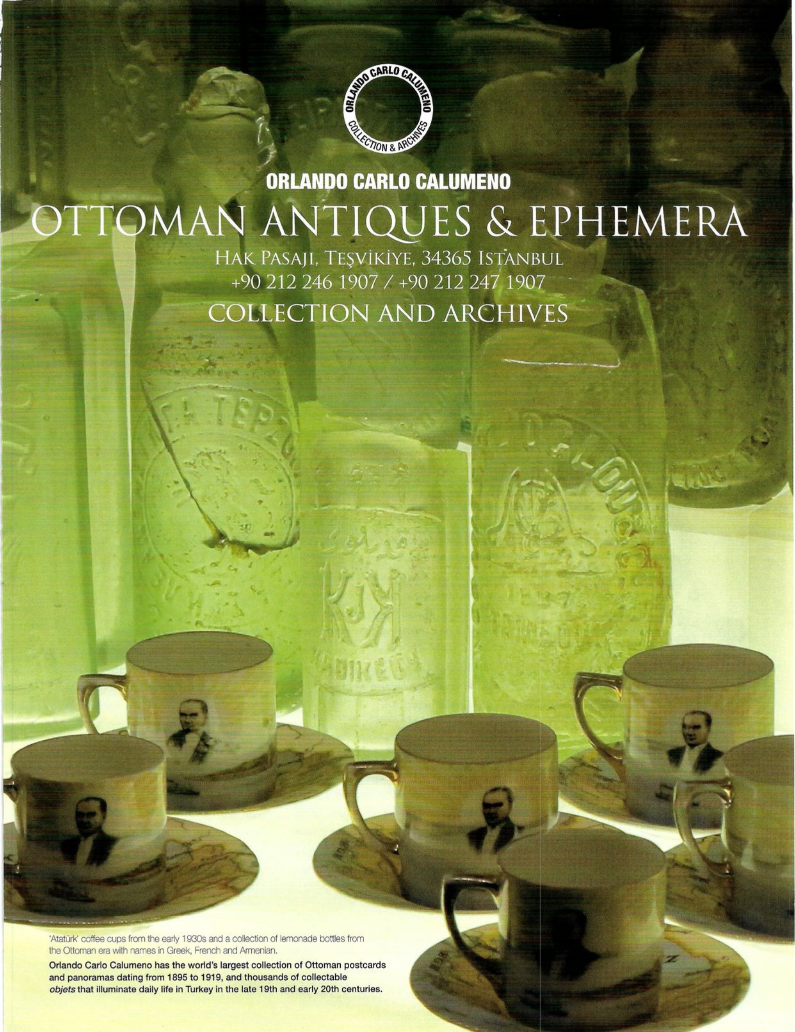

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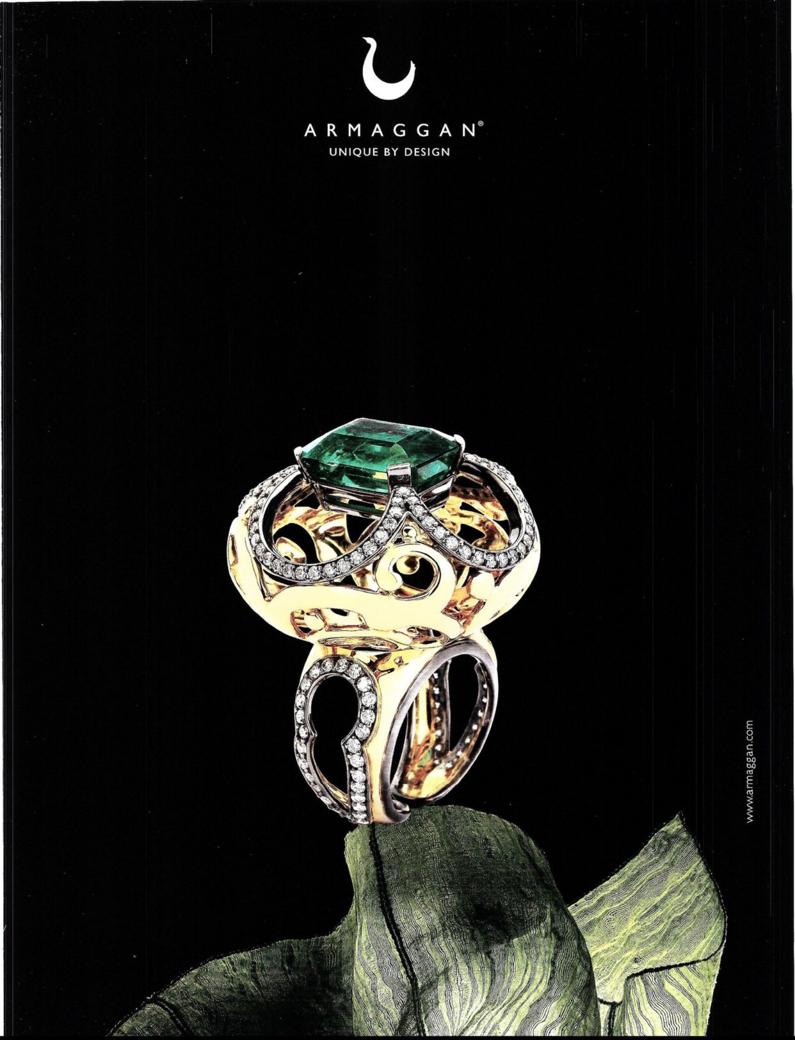
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CONNOISSEUR

THE SAKIP SABANCI MUSEUM HAS JUST CELEBRATED 600 YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN POLAND AND TURKEY. JASON GOODWIN FINDS DEEP-ROOTED AFFINITIES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, AND REDISCOVERS THE DASHING WARRIORS WHO FADED FROM HISTORY

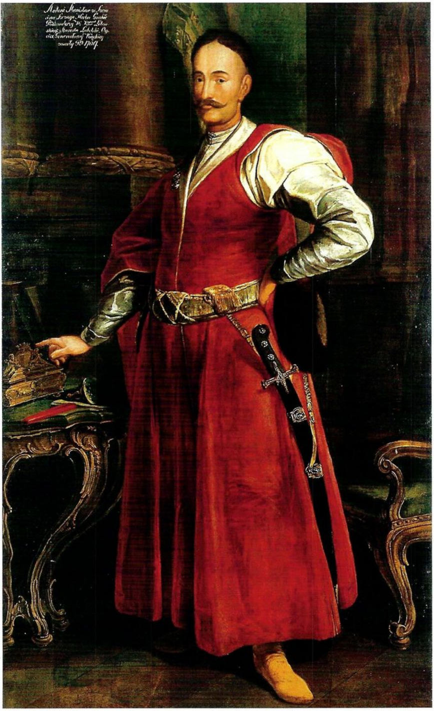
STEPPE BROTHERS

A warrior stands before you. His moustaches curl like the whiskers of a Tatar horseman and his hair is bunched at the back. His crimson silk-velvet coat reaches almost to the ground, figured with gold tassels and gold braid of woven thread. He has thrown back his sleeves to reveal a tunic of pearly silk, its low collar closed by a single jewelled stud. He wears a brooch, and a fur hat, and pantaloons stuffed into supple leather boots. His sword is at hand.

He stands at ease, but when he is fully armed he bristles with agents of death. In battle he bears a 20-foot lance, with a rattling pennant, and at his belt the curved sabre is joined by a sinister hammer that can crash through helmets of solid steel. He carries the short round bow of the steppe, the light, fast and accurate bow preferred by Mongols and Tatars and Turks and all other hard riders from the Eurasian grasslands; his saddle, too, is of the steppe.

From his topknot to his quiver – itself a wonderful thing of dyed and chased leather, encrusted with gold filigree and pearls – this warrior is a dream of the East: but he is not a Tatar, or a Turk. He is a Latin-speaking Polish Catholic of the 17th century with, say, estates a day's ride from Krakow or Lvov, and in choosing to dress in this exotic fashion he expresses his faith in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, in the Catholic Church, and the Golden Liberties of the *szlachta*, the multitudinous nobility of Poland–Lithuania.

He is a Sarmatian.



MUSEUM OF KING JAN III'S PALACE AT WILANÓW

SARMATIAN SWAGGER: STANISŁAW ANTONI SZCZUKA (1652/4–1710), NOBLEMAN, POLITICAL WRITER AND ORATOR. THE RED 'KONTUSZ', SLEEVES THROWN BACK, WORN OVER A KAFTAN-INSPIRED 'ZUPAN', WAS ADOPTED FROM THE OTTOMANS IN THE 16TH CENTURY

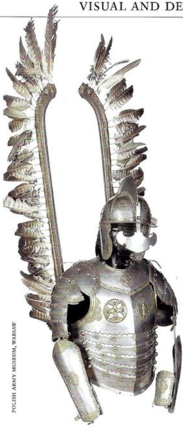
The recent show at Istanbul's Sakıp Sabancı Museum celebrated the 600th anniversary of the first official contact between the Ottomans and that complex political entity known as the Commonwealth of Poland–Lithuania, which stretched from the Baltic down through Belorussia and Ukraine to the Black Sea.

The king whose emissaries visited Mehmed I in Edirne in 1414 was a pagan-born Lithuanian, Władysław Jagiello, who adopted Christianity to take the crown of Poland in 1386. In 1410 his coalition of Tatars, Poles, Lithuanians and Hungarians had crushed the Teutonic Knights at Grunwald, putting an end to centuries of German expansion towards the east. Mehmed was consolidating his position after the collapse of his father's empire at Ankara in 1402.

The two sides shared many interests, and the meeting – to broker a peace in Hungary – was a friendly one. Over the next two centuries these empires, at the height of their power and prestige, often worked in concert to keep the Habsburgs in check, and to counter the rising power of Muscovy. Roxelana, the Ruthenian-born wife of Süleyman the Magnificent, kept up a friendly correspondence with the Polish king, stressing her particular affection for him as one of his former subjects, and the collapse of Hungary at Mohács in 1526 saw the two sides working hard to stop Hungary falling into the hands of the Habsburgs.

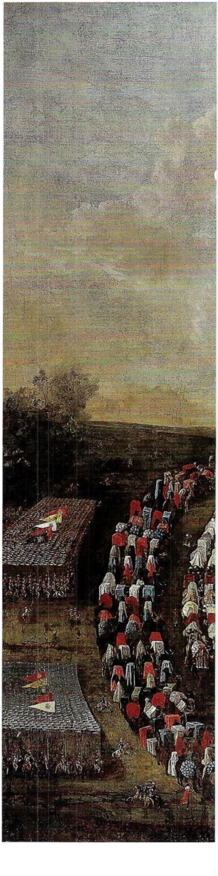
Some conflict was inevitable nonetheless, as the two empires competed for control of the so-called Wild Plains, which lie in the curve of the Dnieper between Kiev and Crimea. The Crimean Tatars launched annual raids into Polish territory, sometimes in advance of regular Turkish campaigns into Moldavia. They were matched by the Orthodox Christian Cossacks, who lived on islands on the Dnieper.

Regular Polish armies, fighting on the Baltic one moment, and on the Black Sea coast the next, were fabulously mobile, with horsemen outnumbering infantry by three to one and using Ottoman saddles, which placed less strain on a horse. When most European troops marched in a single mob, the Polish army already moved in divisions, and its elite cavalry, the Husaria, dominated the battlefield for most of the 17th century. They struck like a battering ram and manoeuvred like a London taxi, in spite of wearing extraordinary feathered wings, made of wooden runners covered in brass and velvet: an example of these, with falcon feathers, was on display in Istanbul from the Polish Army Museum in Warsaw, while a depiction of the Siege of Vienna in September 1683, by the 19th-century Orientalist painter Stanisław Chlebowski, showed them in action. Why they wore these wings remains a mystery, though the sound of the feathers at the charge may have confused the enemy horse, or drowned out the Turks' disconcerting drums and rattles. Equally the wings might have stopped the Tatars from lassoing the knights. But sheer weirdness was a respectable part of a *batterie de guerre*, too.

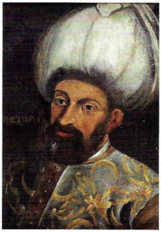


POLISH ARMY MUSEUM, WARSAW

Above The Polish Hussars, horse regiments similar to the Turkish Akinci, wore winged armour into battle, with falcon feathers attached to velvet-covered slats
Opposite The Ottoman army setting out on campaign in an unfinished 17th-century painting intended for a Polish nobleman's seat

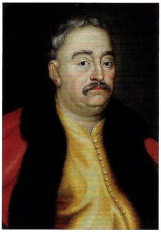


NATIONAL MUSEUM, WARSAW



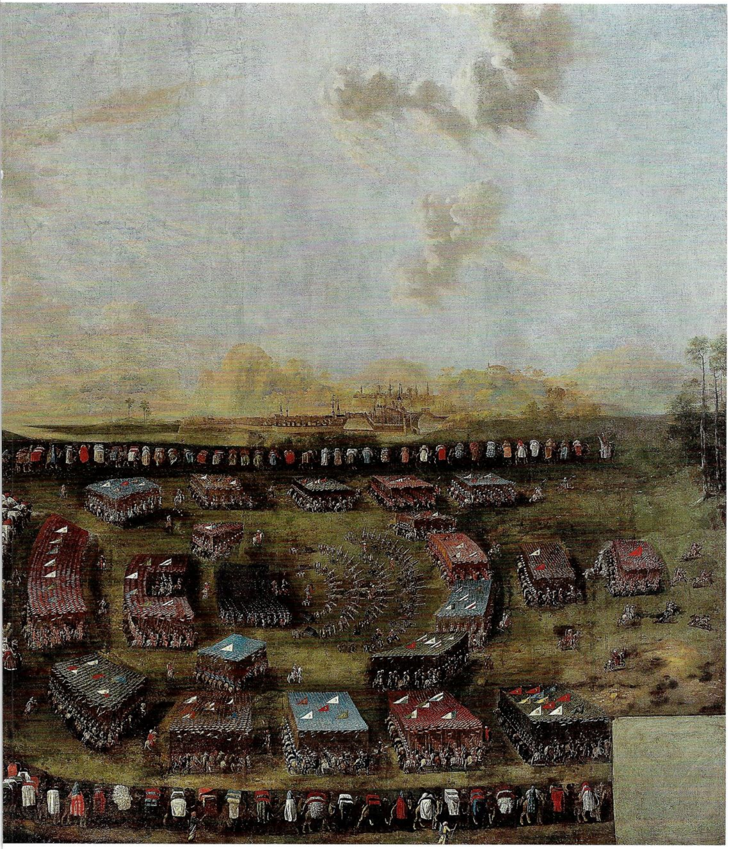
TOPKAPI PALACE MUSEUM, ISTANBUL

Above A 19th-century portrait of the early-15th-century Ottoman sultan Mehmed I (Çelebi Mehmed), whose rise mirrored the rise of Wadislaw II Jagiello's Polish Commonwealth



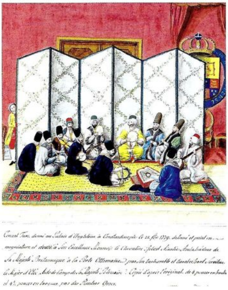
ARCHDIOCESE MUSEUM, WARSAW

Above Jan III Sobieski revived Poland's fortunes as elective king (1674–96). He included Turkish among his languages and won a pyrrhic victory against the Ottomans at Vienna in 1683



The wings, like everything to do with Polish cavalry, undoubtedly belonged with the grand, pervasive and ruinous myth of Polish Sarmatism, which flourished for centuries in the doomed Commonwealth. The Renaissance released a flood of forgotten information about the peoples of early Europe. Ovid, in exile, described the Sarmatians, a Scythian tribe who "ride over on swift ponies, their pride, with bows that shoot long-range arrows and cut a marauding swath through the countryside". They vanished in the sixth century, but for the Polish *szlachta*, the nobility, the ancient warrior elite sounded curiously familiar: deciding the common destiny, strong in battle, consummate horsemen, fiercely proud in defence of their lands, their faith and their common interests.

The *szlachta* seized on the idea that the pagan, egalitarian Sarmatians had settled in Poland and Lithuania, to lord it over the Slavic peasantry by right of conquest, and



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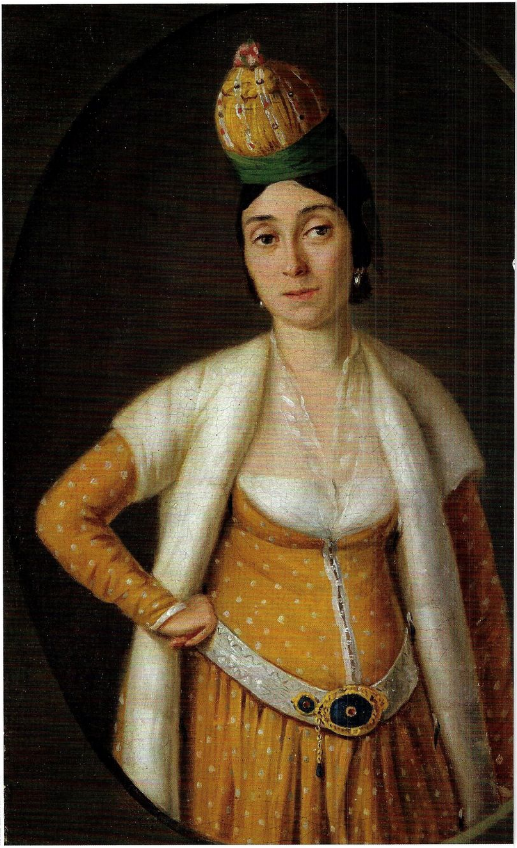
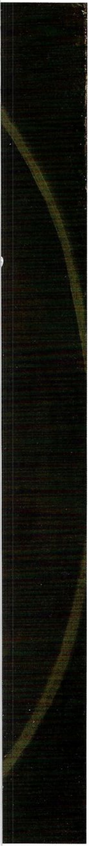
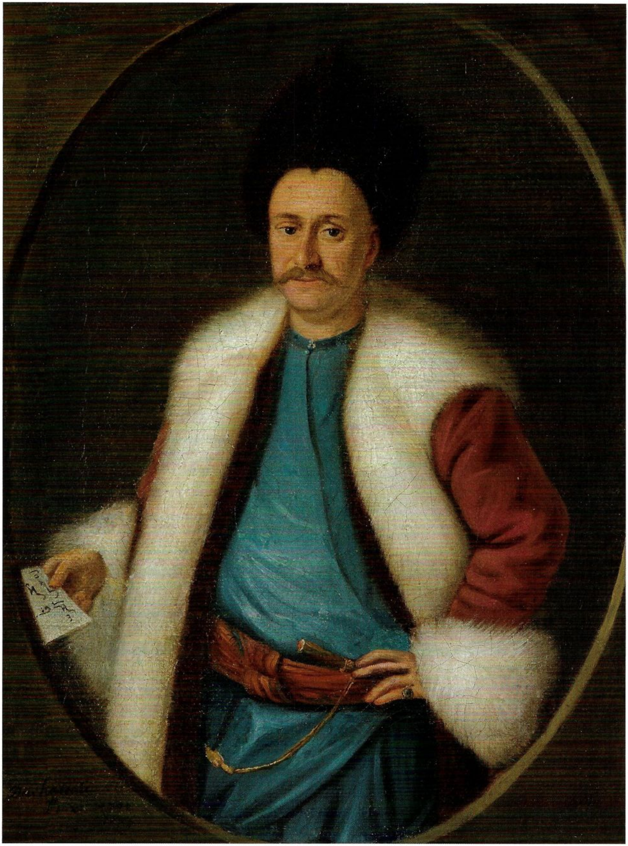
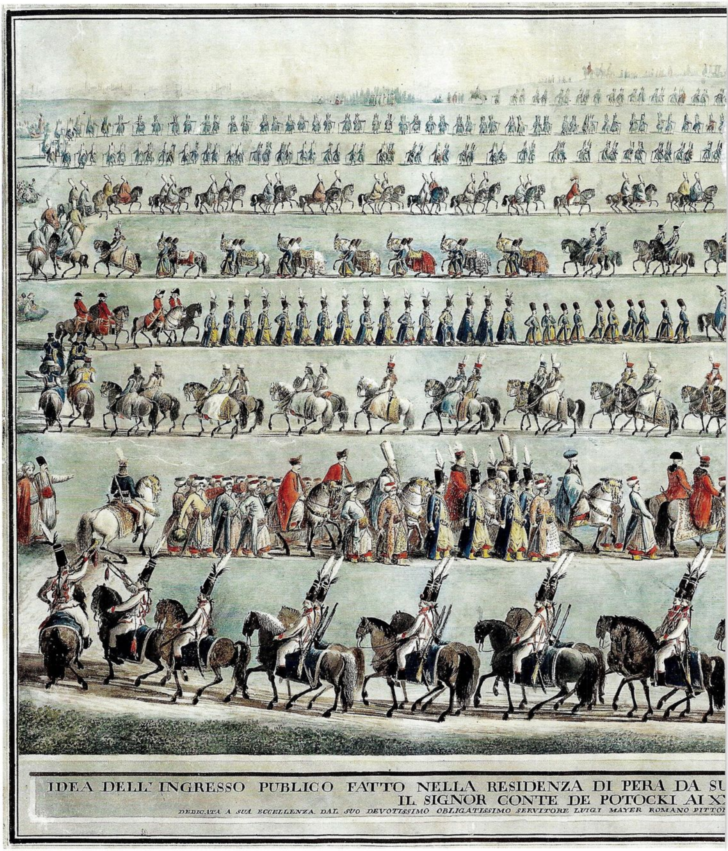


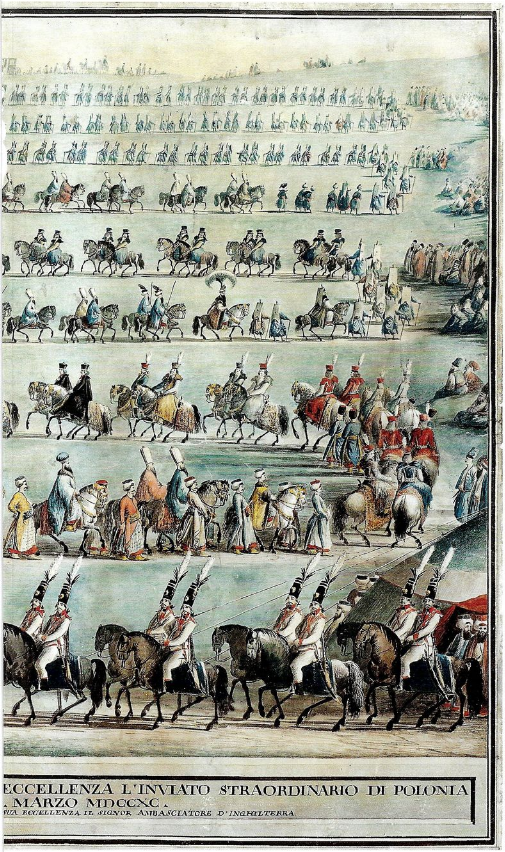
ROYAL CASTLE IN WARSAW

ABOVE OTTOMAN MUSICIANS PERFORM IN THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN PERA, FROM A MANUSCRIPT IN THE ROYAL COLLECTION OF THE WARSAW UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
FAR RIGHT AND RIGHT THE CYPRIOT-BORN ORIENTALIST SCHOLAR TURNED POLISH ARISTOCRAT ANTONI ŁUKASZ CRUTTA AND HIS WIFE, MARIA, IN OTTOMAN COSTUME, 1779






IDEA DELL' INGRESSO PUBLICO FATTO NELLA RESIDENZA DI PERA DA SU
IL SIGNOR CONTE DE POTOCKI AI X
DEDICATA A SUA ECCELLENZA DAL SUO DEVOTISSIMO OBLIGATISSIMO SERVITORE LUIGI MAYER ROMANO PITTO


ECCELLENZA L'INVIATO STRAORDINARIO DI POLONIA
. MARZO MDCCXC .
SUA ECCELLENZA IL SIGNOR AMBASCIATORE D'INGHILTERRA

MUSEUM OF KING JAN III'S PALACE AT WILANÓW

they identified their ancestors as a people not unlike the undeniably glamorous Turks and Tatars. From that antiquarian misconception – for modern scholars doubt the story of the *szlachta's* descent from a Scythian tribe – sprang many of the glories and the disasters of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, as it ballooned and popped over the next three centuries.

Glory lay in the Sarmatian style, a culture of panoply and parade – as those Hussar wings suggest. A nobleman's home was often simple and plainly furnished, but it would be stuffed with hangings, saddles, saddlecloths, uniforms, furs, cannon, tents and kilims, mostly sourced or copied from the Ottomans. It was thought noble to travel with all one's horses, covered in rich cloths, plumes, even wings of their own, rather than leave them shut up in a stable, and to dye their coats carmine, for fun, or green for funerals, with the mane and tail perhaps picked out in contrasting colours.

PRINCES CZARTORYSKI FOUNDATION

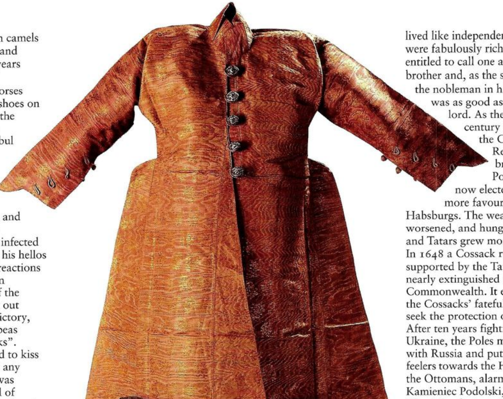
ABOVE AN OTTOMAN SHIELD ENCRUSTED WITH RUBIES AND TURQUOISE, TAKEN BACK TO POLAND AS BOOTY IN 1683 AFTER THE SIEGE OF VIENNA
LEFT THE ENTRY OF THE EMBASSY OF PIOTR POTOCKI INTO PERA, PAINTED BY LUIGI MAYER, C1790. POTOCKI WAS POLAND'S LAST EMISSARY TO THE SUBLIME PORTE

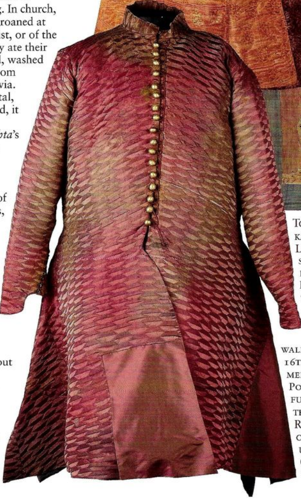
A nobleman's status, like a pasha's, was represented by the magnificence of his entourage, and by his largesse. In 1633 a Polish embassy arrived in Rome with 300 riders and ten camels decked out in feathers and pearls. In Paris, some years later, a procession of deliberately slipshod horses scattered golden horseshoes on the cobbles, to delight the crowd. When a Polish embassy reached Istanbul in 1677, one pasha drily remarked that the ambassador Jan Gniński had brought too many people to sign a peace, and too few to fight a war.

The Sarmatian style infected a nobleman's gestures, his hellos and his goodbyes, his reactions and emotions. King Jan Kazimierz, last ruler of the Commonwealth, burst out sobbing at news of a victory, while "tears as big as peas poured down his cheeks". Children were expected to kiss their parents' feet, and any meeting of noblemen was marked by a great deal of hugging and kissing. In church, people sighed and groaned at the mention of Christ, or of the Virgin. At table they ate their dishes highly spiced, washed down with wines from Hungary or Moldavia.

Noisy and Oriental, martial and splendid, it was a style that expressed the *szlachta*'s sense of themselves as free and noble warriors, bold in defence of Christendom, and of their own privileges, and it ran counter to the chivalric myth of Western Europe, based on fealty and homage. Like the English public-school ethos some centuries later, it provided a unifying myth.

The *szlachta*, about ten per cent of the population, were a very mixed bunch. Some were desperately poor. Others, such as the Radziwiłłs, Zamoyskis and Czartoryskis, who lived like independent princes, were fabulously rich. All were entitled to call one another brother and, as the saying went, the nobleman in his cottage was as good as any great lord. As the 17th century advanced, the Counter-Reformation brought the Polish kings, now elected, to look more favourably on the Habsburgs. The weather worsened, and hungry Cossacks and Tatars grew more unruly. In 1648 a Cossack rebellion, supported by the Tatars, very nearly extinguished the Commonwealth. It ended with the Cossacks' fateful decision to seek the protection of Russia. After ten years fighting in the Ukraine, the Poles made peace with Russia and put out feelers towards the Habsburgs; the Ottomans, alarmed, seized Kamieniec Podolski, a great Ukrainian fortress. Finally, sensing his moment, the grand

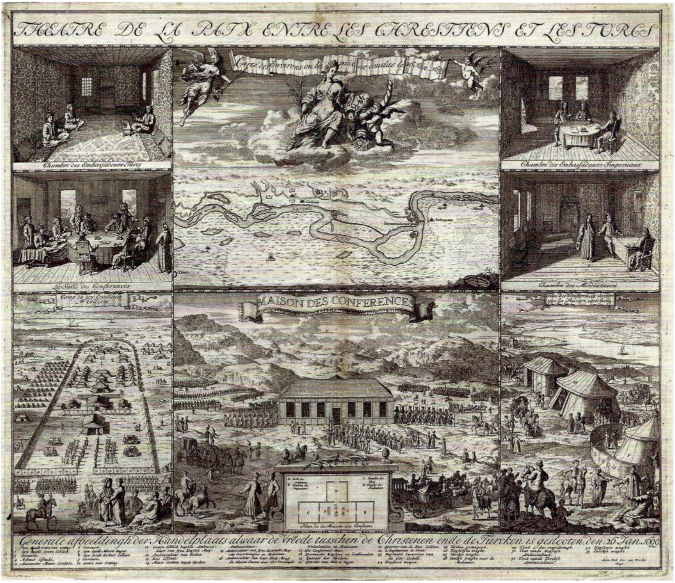

TOPKAPI PALACE MUSEUM, ISTANBUL


NATIONAL MUSEUM, WARSAW

ARCHIDIOCESE MUSEUM, WARSAW

ARCHIDIOCESE MUSEUM, WARSAW

TOP AN OTTOMAN CHILD'S KAFTAN IN THE TOPKAPI LEFT A STRIKINGLY SIMILAR 'ZUPAN', FASHIONABLE AT THE POLISH COURT IN THE 16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES ABOVE PARTS OF AN OTTOMAN TENT WALL, WITH A TYPICALLY 16TH-CENTURY MEDALLION DESIGN. POLISH PALACES WERE FULL OF EXQUISITE TENTS AFTER VIENNA RIGHT A BISHOP'S CHASUBLE, MADE UP OF 17TH-CENTURY OTTOMAN 'KEMHA' VELVET


THEATRE DE LA PAIX ENTRE LES CHRESTIENS ET LES TURCS
Carte des Environs ou la paix a été conclue le 26 Jan. 1699
Chambre des Embassadeurs Turcs
Chambre des Embassadeurs Imperiaux
La Salle des Conferences
Chambre des Mediateurs
MAISON DES CONFERENCE
Plan de la Maison des Conferences
Generale afbeeldingh der Handelplaats alwaar de Vreede tusschen de Christenen ende de Turcken is gesslooten den 26 Jan. 1699

WROCLOW UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Above Juggling diplomacy. This plate, engraved in The Hague in 1699, depicts the negotiation of the Treaty of Karlowitz between the Holy League and the Ottoman Empire. The house in which the meetings took place had a room for each party either side of the summit room, allowing everyone to enter simultaneously. A divan was provided for the Ottomans to sit on

Overleaf Potocki's embassy leaves the palace of the Kaymakam (governor) of Pera in 1790. The artist is thought to be Luigi Mayer

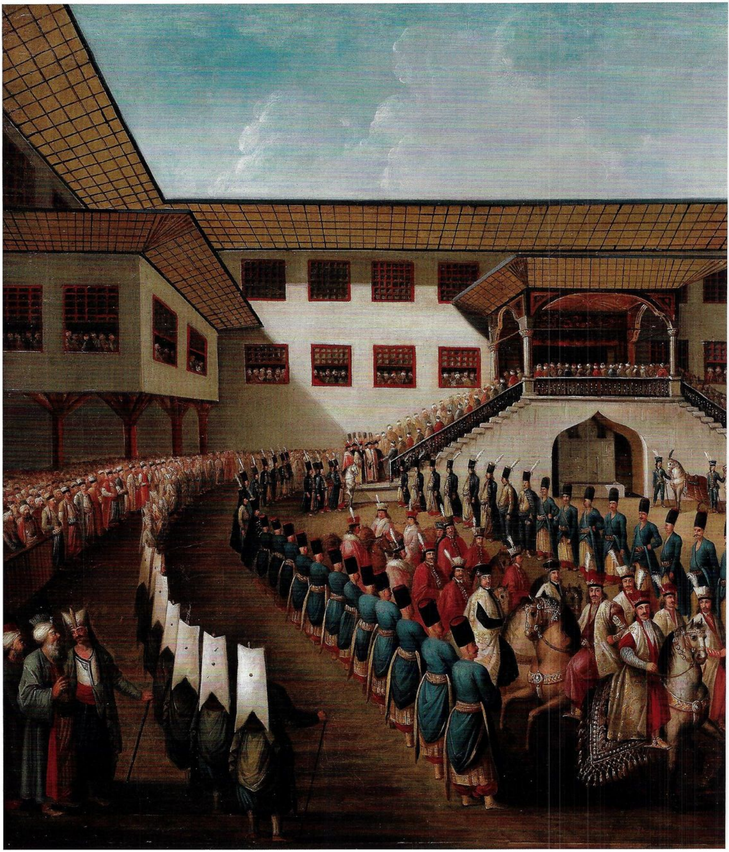
vizier Kara Mustafa Pasha marched on Vienna itself.

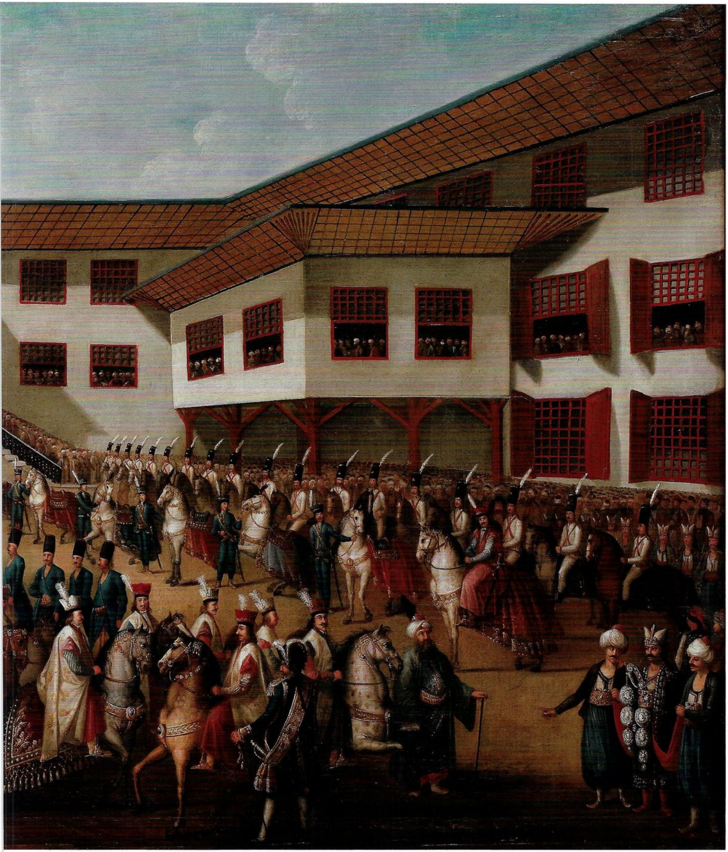
Jan Sobieski's near-miraculous appearance at Vienna on September 12, 1683 represented the grandest gesture – and perhaps the last gasp – of Sarmatism as an effective political and military style. Sobieski was steeped in the Eastern wars and the Eastern styles. Born in a thunderstorm during a Tatar raid, he grew up speaking Latin, French, Italian, German and Turkish. In 1654 he visited Istanbul. Many of the exhibits at the museum belong to the sensational plunder Sobieski and his troops took at Vienna in 1683, scrupulously preserved in Poland ever since.

"The tents and all the waggons have fallen into my hands, *et mille autres galanteries fort jolies et fort riches, mais fort riches,* and I haven't looked through all of it yet," the king wrote to his wife, hours after the battle. Adam Zamoyski recounts Sobieski's passion for an Ottoman pearl-worked saddlecloth, so lovely he chose to use it at his coronation. Years later he gave it, as evidence of his esteem, to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. The duke, brought up in a different cultural milieu, privately dismissed it as *"una cosa del barbaro lusso"*– a thing of barbaric magnificence.

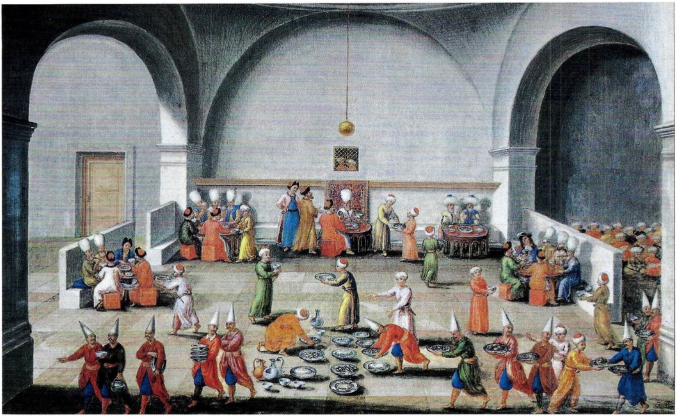
The last Polish king with the presence to push a national policy, Sobieski was thwarted by circumstance and the indifference of his great magnates. His victory at Vienna broke the Ottoman grip on central Europe for ever – but Poland–Lithuania took no profit. Instead, it was the Habsburgs who gained Hungary, while Russia had to be given Kiev to keep her in the anti-Ottoman coalition.

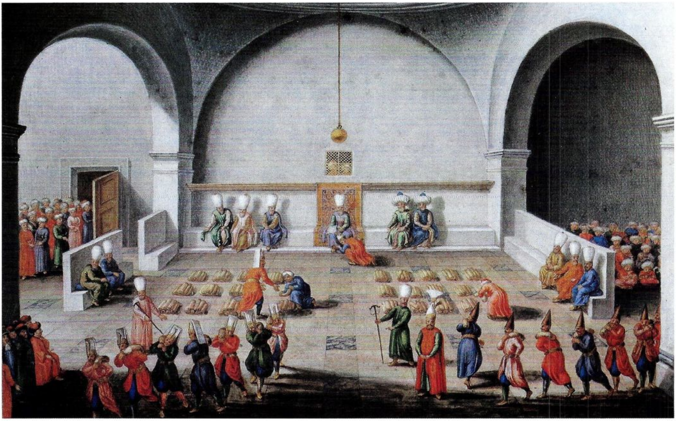
Sobieski's victories played into the hands of the *szlachta,* too. The Commonwealth's success in warfare critically obscured the urgency of reform.





MUSEUM OF KING JAN III'S PALACE AT WILANÓW





PRINCES CZARTORYSKI FOUNDATION

Russia and the nations of Western Europe moved towards centralisation, autocracy and efficiency, while the Commonwealth prided itself on election, collectivism, devolution and display. For a long time, it seemed like a winning formula. Having navigated the shoals and reefs of European history seemingly to emerge with their Scythian privileges intact, the *szlachta* were very conscious of their success. Their Golden Liberties gave them elected kings. The right of *liberum veto*, which allowed members of the Sejm (legislature) to force an immediate end to sessions and nullify any legislation passed therein, slowly paralysed the functioning of the state, reflecting their ancient egalitarianism.

But the proud warrior, decked in eastern finery and acknowledging no superior, was also the complacent country bumpkin, mired in provincialism, short-termism, self-satisfaction and ignorance. He was the man who, for a fistful of Habsburg, Romanov or Valois gold, would exercise his veto in the Sejm, and bring all business there to a halt – as did Władysław Siciński in 1652, before vanishing back to his Lithuanian estate. From then on any nobleman could interrupt, and even suspend, the operation of the Sejm. All of them, together, participated in riotous elections for their king, who arrived on his throne beholden to one group or another. By the 18th century, each of Poland's elected kings depended on Russian support.

"The Russians are in every town and city in Poland," observed Nahifi Mehmed Emin Efendi, on an embassy in 1775. "They said, 'We are guests...' But such sovereign matters as the arrest and confinement of criminals... and defence and protection, were in the hands of the Russians."

It was described as anarchy, and many Poles were proud of it. When it came to war, they would fight, but otherwise they would cultivate their own estates. No courts, no toadies. They trusted to the belief that they had found a perfect constitution. On his Warsaw summerhouse, the king's secretary Stanisław Lubomirski inscribed a motto: "I wish not for God; I seek not Heaven; I know not other lands; I understand not other people; I know not myself."

Gestures and individual heroics were not enough to counter the growing and ruinous influence of foreign powers. In 1768 the Ottomans launched what their chroniclers called the Polish War, to prevent the election of another pro-Russian king. They lost. Russia nibbled at the edges. In 1783 Catherine the Great illegally annexed Crimea. The renewed failure of the Ottoman response freed up her armies to turn again on Poland. Partitioned between Russia, Prussia and the Austrians, the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth ceased to exist in 1795.

Sarmatism itself had fallen from fashion by then. Only after the failed Polish uprising of 1831 did a new generation look back on Sarmatism and see not so much a bankrupt form of statecraft as a unique moral style, in heroic defiance of convention and Realpolitik. Refusing to be harnessed to the universal project of autocracy, the quiet country gentlemen of Poland–Lithuania – mild in peace, and terrible in war – had taken the path of martyrdom and honour.

Nobody else much cared. Of all the states of Europe, only the Sublime Porte refused to recognise the Partitions, with the loss of their old ally and adversary, and shared memories of grandeur. Well into the 19th century, whenever ambassadors gathered at the Porte, a chamberlain would announce the Ambassador from Lehistan: still on his way, but unavoidably delayed.

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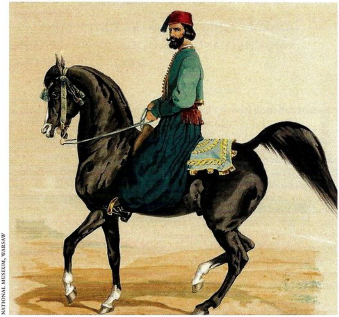
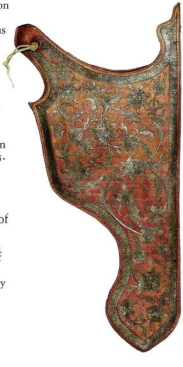

NATIONAL MUSEUM, WARSAW


NATIONAL MUSEUM, POZNAN

OPPOSITE TWO MINIATURES FROM KRAKOW'S PRINCES CZARTORYSKI MUSEUM SHOWING SCENES FROM THE DIVAN CHAMBER IN TOPKAPI PALACE, PAINTED IN 1679 BY PIERRE PAUL SEVIN: LUNCH SERVED TO A FOREIGN DEPUTATION ON THE TOPKAPI'S FAMOUS BLUE-AND-WHITE PORCELAIN (TOP); JANISSARIES BEING PAID AS THE DIPLOMATS LOOK ON (BELOW)
ABOVE A PORTRAIT THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN OF THE ÉMIGRÉ WRITER MICHAL CZAYKOWSKI (1804–86), KNOWN IN TURKEY AS SADIK PASHA, ONE OF MANY PROMINENT POLES WHO SETTLED IN THE COUNTRY. IT IS NOW SUGGESTED THAT IT IS OF NONE OTHER THAN SULTAN ABDÜLMECİD HIMSELF, PAINTED DURING THE CRIMEAN WAR
LEFT A LEATHER OTTOMAN BOW CASE EMBROIDERED WITH SILVER THREAD, A TROPHY TAKEN BACK FROM VIENNA IN 1683 BY COUNT CHRISTOPH LEOPOLD SCHAFFGOTSCH

Jason Goodwin writes the Yashim series of detective novels, which feature a fictional Polish ambassador to the Sublime Porte. 'The Baklava Club', the latest adventure, is available from cornucopia.net

The catalogue of the recent exhibition 'Distant Neighbour, Close Memories: 600 Years of Turkish–Polish Relations', at the Sakıp Sabancı Museum, Istanbul, is available from cornucopia.net at £28.50

The Pera Museum will revisit the Ottoman–Polish theme with 'Polish Orientalism' (Oct 24, 2014 – Jan 18, 2015). For insights into the curious relationship between Turkey and Poland, see the blog poloniaottomanica.blogspot.co.uk

Time to bite the bullet

ANDREW FINKEL HAS COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT IT'S TIME TO PUT HIS MONEY WHERE HIS MOUTH IS AND JOIN OTHER JOURNALISTS IN DOING ALL IT TAKES TO DEFEND THE INTEGRITY AND INDEPENDENCE OF THE TURKISH PRESS

I am suffering from a chronic case of not being careful enough about what I wish for. A project I've plotted and schemed to achieve for many years, abandoned and then revived, has finally come to fruition. What I hadn't taken on board was that it would involve me going out to work. I have been forced to abandon my comfortable commute from the breakfast table to my study to go to a bus stop, take a ferry and then wend my way uphill to a street off Taksim Square. The window of my delightful office looks out over the Bosphorus and the neighbourhood I set off from. Visitors praise the view. I look at it with a twinge of regret.

I am not whining. I realise I'm not the only one to lead a Jekyll and Hyde existence between the sedate privacy of home and the elbow-jostling jungle of the route to work. My journey compares favourably to many in Istanbul who spend days (literally – an average 118 hours a year) stuck in traffic. Statistics, nearly ten years old, report that 45 percent of those in Istanbul spend two hours getting to their jobs. I actually enjoy the ten minutes it takes to sail from Asia to Europe.

I have had an office near Taksim before, so I should be able to slip back into a routine. But the area's personality has changed in what is now nearly 20 years, and I find myself in unfamiliar terrain. Even back in the 1990s it was a neighbourhood in transition. The low-rise office blocks on the way to the Hilton were no longer fit for purpose in the dawning computer age, so many businesses and the banks were busy migrating north and east to the new commercial districts. Beyoğlu, to the west of Taksim, by contrast, had just been pedestrianised and was coming back to life as an entertainment district.

It was also a time when American-style malls were sprouting in the fast-urbanising periphery. It was to be some years (2006) before Vakko, Turkey's first home-grown fashion house, would uproot itself from the street where it grew up for a shopping centre far away. Yet Beyoğlu had already begun to be governed by the rule of reverse chic. Its colonnaded façades and 19th-century arcades provided a competing vision of what it really means to live in a city. The shopping-centre food courts were aimed at families or urban youngbloods revelling in their alienation. A stroll down Beyoğlu made you feel part of a tradition older than yourself.

Now even Beyoğlu has a shopping mall and there are more on the way. Taksim itself has acquired a dystopic air – the hub of a city with no centre. Taksim Square was intended as a pole from which to fly the standard of the new Republic, and its modestly proportioned memorial is still the focus of the odd patriotic pageant. But increasingly it is a district that no longer knows what it is about, and so boasts of its incoherence.

The modernist opera house to the east of the square stands derelict while the debate goes on to restore it or tear it down. Tarlabaşı, once a boulevard leading off the square, is also in a state of limbo, one side torn down in advance of a yet-to-be-built luxury development. It seems unlikely that Turkey's new rich will want to invest quite yet in a neighbourhood adjacent to Gezi Park, which last year became a symbol of opposition to luxury development. There are still nights when police chase demonstrators through the back streets with volleys of tear gas canisters. Not a tonic for property values.

Gezi Park itself has been tidied up. But the authorities are jittery and they shut it down completely at the first sign of people congregating for any purpose more serious than eating a sandwich. The municipality has burrowed under the square to send traffic via a tunnel. This may or may not be a good thing but is certainly odd, because nobody can decide what should go on above ground. Taksim is now less of a square than a barren, shapeless, flat area of crazed concrete. If this weren't cheerless enough, it is also home to displaced Syrian families. Children beg near the metro entrances, a reminder of a conflict without remedy some 500 miles away.

The new craze around Taksim is for baklava parlours which, despite having popped up yesterday, boast of being older than Methuselah, or at least founded during the reign of Sultan Abdülaziz. Their proliferation is an attempt to create an alcohol-free café culture. Those in search of a drink or something kinder to their tooth enamel must wander the Beyoğlu back streets. But this is well worth the detour. Those streets are a revelation. All the energy and creativity that has been shooed away from public view seems to have taken root there. One unexpected advantage of working off Taksim is that no whim is too trivial to go unrequited. Within minutes of my front door are places to get a shoe made, a beard shaved, a knife sharpened, a shirt tailored, a picture framed – not to mention the brothels, camouflaged in passageways or around the corner or around the corner after next. More to the point, there is a bewildering variety of small, bustling places for lunch, be it beans on buttery rice, a richly braised shank of lamb, or a Roman pizza cooked in a wood-burning oven. I mention Balkanlar, a cafeteria with seating on three floors – not because it is so good (it isn't bad at all) but because it is so astonishingly cheap. Farther down Beyoğlu are the chic exponents of new Turkish cuisine. Here, in the soup cauldrons and trays of steaming food, is where it all began. You could spend more than TL10 (£3) on a meal but it would be too much to eat. On my last visit I looked up from my braised artichoke to see a long queue of riot police patiently waiting to fill their trays. What better recommendation.

My new life is the result of an old beef with my own profession and the time I have spent bobbing up and down on the vicissitudes of the Turkish press. Some time ago, based on my experience as a columnist on Turkish-language newspapers, I concluded that the country needed some sort of media observatory to lobby for editorial independence and decent standards. Journalists were being punished for doing the right thing and newspapers were unwilling to protect them. This was because mainstream media were themselves complicit in cronyism. Instead of doing the news they were colluding in the absence of public accountability. I was not the only one to come to this conclusion. Colleagues had nodded their heads in sage agreement for years, but we all shrugged our shoulders rather than put them to the wheel.

I had come to accept that it was not my fate to move men or mountains, and that brought its own sense of relief. This was just before even middle-of-the-road TV stations ignored events in Gezi Park to broadcast documentaries about penguins. And before prominent columnists and honest reporters began losing their jobs in droves for acting in the public interest. It became all too obvious that the defence of press integrity was not an idea whose time had come but one whose time may have come too late. Friends began to upbraid me with my former good intentions and, to cut a long story short, the tumblers of what had seemed an impossible plan began to fall into place. We founded an organisation called Platform24 whose mission is to do what it can. It appears to be gathering momentum. And it is something to keep in mind when the alarm rings its cheery reminder that I have to go out to work. ◆

Andrew Finkel, contributing editor to Cornucopia, has worked from Istanbul as a journalist for 25 years. He is a founding member of P24, (platform24.org), in support of media independence

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BOOKS

TULIPS OF THE WORLD UNITED; CROSSING EUROPE ON FOOT WITH PATRICK LEIGH FERMOR AND NICK HUNT; ROBERT COLLEGE'S UNIQUE HISTORY; TURKEY'S MOST FABULOUS MOSQUES; STRANGE GOINGS-ON IN THE EMPEROR TEA GARDEN; GEMS FROM THE ÖMER KOÇ LIBRARY

BLOOMING MARVELS

Andrew Byfield

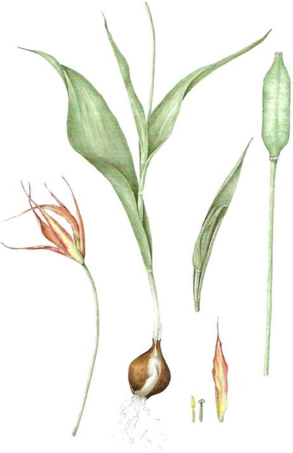
THE GENUS TULIPA: TULIPS OF THE WORLD

Diana Everett
Kew Publishing 2013, £68

It would be difficult to visit historic Istanbul today without noticing the imagery of tulips on so many of the city's most beautiful artefacts. From the high relief of the fountains to the intricate glazes of pottery and tiles, the distinctive Ottoman tulip appears time and again. For more than two centuries the Ottomans were obsessed by the elegance of the tulip and grew over 3,000 varieties, each characterised by almond-shaped petals drawn out into an exaggerated taper.

What many visitors to the city may not know is that tulips occur abundantly in the wilds of Turkey, as native or naturalised species. For those wishing to know more about the wild species found eastwards from Europe to their Central Asian heartland, Diana Everett's book is an excellent place to start.

Everett is an artist first and foremost. It was the serendipitous choice of tulips – "small, simple, pretty and quite quick to paint" – as the subject of the painting portfolio for her diploma that subsequently led her on a voyage of discovery to the mountains and steppes of Central Asia. Fortunately for us, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, must have been impressed by her artistic flair, for they have joined forces, publishing this stunning volume in their illustrious Botanical Magazine Monograph series. Everett's paintings are supported by written species accounts, supplemented with chapters on tulip hunting in the wild, cultivation (by Richard Wilford, author and a collections manager at Kew) and classification.



'TULIPA ACUMINATA' ('CORNUTA') BEARS THE NEAREST RESEMBLANCE TO THE THOUSANDS OF VARIETIES OF OLD OTTOMAN 'NEEDLE TULIPS' ILLUSTRATED BY TURKISH ARTISTS OF THE 18TH CENTURY. DID IT INSPIRE THEM? OR IS IT SIMPLY THE LAST SURVIVOR?

As a keen grower of snowdrops (*Galanthus*) I have long become inured to the smart-alec gardeners and flower lovers who profess to recognise but two snowdrops, the single- and the double-flowered forms. With tulips – a genus I am only starting to understand – I have to confess there are an awful lot of red ones, with a smattering of yellows thrown in for good measure. The subtle variations between species, combined with their long pedigree in cultivation, have upset their natural distribution, making the genus something of a nightmare to plant taxonomists.

When Everett set out on her quest, roughly 150 species were recognised, but recent studies on tulip DNA by Mike Fay and Maarten Christenhusz have whittled this down to a manageable 78, debunking many of the "species" named over the centuries (yes, we botanists do like naming new plants!).

This rationalisation has presented the author with a headache: with 140 "species" painted and in the can, so to speak, what to do with the discredited ones? Author and publisher have chosen to include them all, but somehow the full descriptions of these do not sit comfortably alongside the recognised species.

Formal accounts of all 140 (botanical descriptions, distribution notes and ploidy) and the paintings form the heart of this weighty tome (380 pages). However, to me, as a botanically minded reader, it is the discursive musings about each species – which is where a monograph author really shows his or her grip on the chosen genus – that raise a merely good monograph into the great category.

I love a generous strewing of information about the plant's history (with anecdotes about its discoverer), details of its ecology and distribution, links to closely related species, and quirks of the species in cultivation. Such elaboration is often a tad thin in the current volume – though, to be fair, *Tulipa* is a large genus, widely and thinly scattered over a large and somewhat remote tract of the globe.

Furthermore, a dichotomous key would help greatly in putting accurate names to species: in its absence, I am simply not sure how easy it would be to put an accurate name to a plant. And a few inaccuracies niggle (for example, the "recently named tulip" *Tulipa cinnabarina* was "found in south Turkey in 2002", yet it was described as new to science in *The New Plantsman* in the year 2000).

These comments aside, I cannot but agree with the preface written by Martyn Rix that "this splendid and beautiful book... is easily the most detailed ever published on the genus *Tulipa*". It has certainly got me hooked on the genus and is a hugely informative source for anyone keen on seeing species in the wild, or growing them in their gardens.

One final feature of the book deserves particular mention: the photographs. I have long thought that we humans fall into two camps: settlers and nomads. Settlers hanker after neat fields, shelter belts and fences, metaphorically if not literally, while nomads are never happier than when gently gazing (or even cantering) across the wavering feather grasslands of our semi-arid steppes, with a sky of illimitable blue above. When it comes to atmospheric photographs of tea breaks among almond groves, tulip-studded grasslands with distant citadels beyond, and colourfully costumed locals, I know which camp I fall into.

I can't help thinking that in undertaking this book Diana Everett has been one of the luckiest of people. And it is our good fortune that through her paintings, writing and photographs we have been allowed a glimpse of the grassy uplands of these distant lands.

Andrew Byfield is co-author of 'Important Plant Areas in Turkey' (WWF – Turkey) and a founder of the wild plant charity Plantlife

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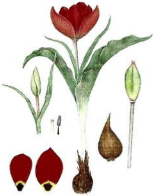
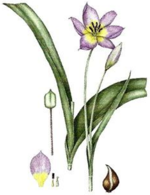
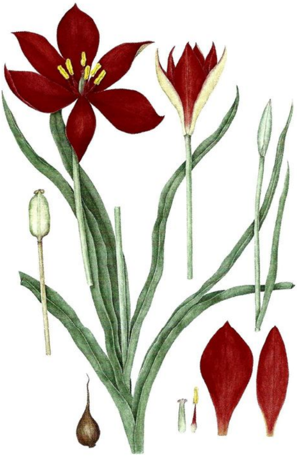


'Tulipa armena' var 'lycica' is perhaps the commonest of all Turkey's native tulips, stretching in its different varieties all the way from the Datça peninsula to Kars



'Tulipa saxatilis' was long thought to be a Cretan speciality, but has been found in the past 40 years on the Bozburun peninsula, south of Marmaris



'Tulipa sprengeri': introduced into gardens a hundred years ago, but until recently not known as a wild plant, this tulip apparently survived only in gardens (where it is perhaps the most tractable species of tulip to grow, and the last to flower, naturalising where happy from abundant seed production). Rumour has it that this legendary species was at last found again in the wild in 1989

MUCH TO WONDER AT

Roger Norman

The Broken Road

Patrick Leigh Fermor
John Murray, £25

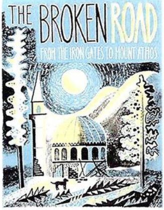
Walking the Woods and the Water

Nick Hunt
Nicholas Brealey, £10.99

Patrick Leigh Fermor started his celebrated walk from the Hook of Holland to the Golden Horn in 1934, at the age of 20, wrote down his account of it in middle age and was still tinkering with the final volume when he died three years ago. The first two volumes, *A Time of Gifts* and *Between the Woods and the Water*, had been published three or more decades before. PLF struggled to complete the trilogy, as well he might. The walk was a distant event and each time he got out the story it was as a different writer and, to an extent, another person.

The editors of *The Broken Road* hesitated before publishing a book that its author had never seen. There were only a few notes on the time in Istanbul, and nothing at all on Turkish Thrace. The one surviving diary covered almost the last stretch (Bulgaria and Romania), but it had never been collated with the account set down later, which it contradicted at various points. "The present volume is not the polished and reworked book that he would have desired," the editors admit, "...but by the time of his death he had expended so much labour and thought on the texts that their relegation to an archive would have seemed sad and wrong."

Unquestionably. Despite the occasionally awkward insertions made at later dates, *The Broken Road* is a magnificent book, brimful of wonderful descriptions of people and places and peppered with intriguing insights about the Slavs, the Greeks, the Ottomans, the Gypsies, the Sarakatsani, the Orthodox Church and



THE LATE PATRICK LEIGH FERMOR AND THE POSTHUMOUS THIRD VOLUME OF HIS WALK TO ISTANBUL

all the vestiges of the rich tangle of Balkan culture.

The boy-hero of the tale, as remembered by the man he became, is a charming companion – adventurous, brave, infinitely curious, yet modest and often inconspicuous. He attempts communication with everybody, in French or German or Bulgarian or Romanian, which he scarcely knows, and even Greek, based on a schoolboy's knowledge of the classics. We find him in conversation with Moldovan merchants, Macedonian fishermen, Romanian whores and Greek abbots. In Bulgaria he falls in love with Nadejda, a laughing, mischievous, liberty-loving girl whom any student traveller then or now would love to love – and later keeps company with Rosa, the 40-year-old manageress of an empty hotel, who launders his filthy gear and plumps his pillow before he sleeps. These friendships are related with feeling and discretion. There's a generosity of spirit in him that cannot be missed, and it must have been this that earned him a welcome in so many different homes, from hovels to mansions. In Bucharest he is fêted by the rich and famous, even after appearing at their grand residences muddy, travel-stained and shod in battered boots which become a character in their own right. Those boots! What could they have been made of; were they really as extraordinary as they appear? At some point along the way they are whisked off for repair by a friendly cobbler and come back newly soled and studded, but it's not long before they are once again an object of shame, when setting out for the opera in Bucharest. A lost bootlace is replaced by a shepherd, who fashions a new one from a strip of sheep gut scarcely dry.

The Bucharest chapter throngs with important personages familiar only to students of Balkan history, and perhaps not even to them. There's a strain of snobbism – conspicuous in an account where the great majority of favoured characters belong to the tribes of the common man – but PLF is not unaware of it. After a list of Cantacuzenes and Mavrocordatos, Callimachis and Mavroyenis – names with "a resonance of splendour and remoteness" – he fears the reader "might jump to the conclusion that I was suffering from an acute access of class feeling". "So might I," he concludes disarmingly. "There's probably worse to come."

There isn't. As soon as we're on the road again, PLF's ineffable landscapes are back, with the sense that it is not only the walker who is on the move but the whole countryside, with its great forests and rolling scarps and turbulent streams and booming trees. A ploughed hillside "uncoils" its furrows, the track "sinks into a deep combe", valleys "twist upward". On the Black Sea shore, "at the end of plunging tunnels of trunks and branches… the European continent fell to fragments in spikes and small tufted islets far below, standing in translucent, pale green water, which darkened as it receded from the rocks… and fled away to the skyline. The almost still water was stirred by incoming creases as slight as a breath on silk, just enough to hem the join of rock and water with a thin bracelet of white."

This incessant movement of the land – often embracing the aeonian unfolding of geological ages – is the distinctive feature of PLF's hymns to the elusive loveliness of the natural world. Even towns may share in this sense of perpetual motion. At Plovdiv, built among steep hills, "down their flanks the roofs poured, with houses hazardously perched on ledges and the rock projecting in blades and spikes: round and through them rose and fell a ravelled skein of cobbled alleyways… crisscrossed by buckled and twisted tiger-stripes of sunlight." Now 300 words are required to describe the passage of a stork over the tabletops: "an emblematic bird on a sail… dipping along the lane like a sigh of wonder". "There is much to wonder at!" he exclaims elsewhere. The words might serve as a motto for his works, or for his life. Architecture, costumes, trades, politics, faiths, greetings and all the idiosyncrasies of peoples are grist to the mill of his mind.

Readers may find themselves wondering what in *The Broken Road* was written in the 1960s and what was added later. Which passages belong to the period in his nineties, when tunnel vision forced him to work with a microscope, at the rate of a few lines at a time? Occasionally additions are signalled. "I am almost irresistibly tempted to slip in one or two balloons from a later date in the pages that lie ahead," he writes in the chapter on the Wallachian Plain, "… I shall see how it goes." It *is* risky. Neither the tentative mood nor the detachment from the text suits this impulsive, passionate writer.

The final chapter of the book, relating a fortnight spent in the monasteries of Mount Athos, is taken from his diary of the time. The editors must have considered before including a footnote to the body of the book that does not directly follow, geographically or chronologically, what went before. Here are simply the impressions of the young traveller sojourning among the monks, without help, intellectual or stylistic, from his older self.

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There are clumsy passages that the mature writer might have struck out. There are moments of juvenilia and of sudden homesickness, the admission after all that two years of much solitude and discomfort and sheer foreignness were sometimes hard to bear. The characters – even the wise Father Basil, who takes the young man under his episcopal wing – do not spring alive in the manner we have learnt to expect. The descriptions of the monasteries fail to sparkle and surprise. Yet the signs of an unusual intelligence and the skill to express it are already present. Under the "huge white mass" of Mount Athos he sees "splashes of fretted sunlight falling on the flagged and stepped pathway". A portrait of Patriarch Joachim III shows "an energetic old man with a streaky beard, his bosom hung with ribbons, crosses and archiepiscopal insignia the size of jam tarts, and his black frock crusted with stars and orders". The size of *jam tarts*.

It is the forlorn ambience of the remote community of Konstamonitou, oddly, that stays in the mind. A handful of aged monks, cut off from the world, religiously keeping to The Rule, give the young traveller a cool welcome. They dine on "vegetables and sardines, raw and swimming in yellow oil, with stone hard loaves". But afterwards out comes the *tsipouro* and a merry time is had, with everyone crammed into the visitor's little room. The next day the monks are at the gates, urging him not to leave.

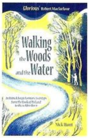
Nobody – not the lovely Nadejda nor the appealing Rosa nor the magnates of Wallachia nor the students of Varna – wants him to leave. You can see why. He picks up the basics of whatever language in a trice, sings along in Bulgarian, Romanian, Greek and even Russian, dances with the best and, when unoccupied, reads Byron in English and Balzac and Dostoevsky in French or scribbles in his diaries for hours. Helped on the road by a charcoal burner, he makes the man a gift of his precious Bulgarian dagger.

The glorious Black Sea cave scene cannot be avoided. He has lost his way at night in a storm and falls into the sea among the rocks of the Bulgarian coastline, cutting his leg and losing his torch. Hemmed in by unfathomable pools and unclimbable cliffs, he wonders whether the end has come. At the last gasp there is firm sand underfoot, an inlet and a cave lit from within. Inside he finds a group of Bulgarian shepherds and Greek fishermen, sheltering together amid the seamen's clutter and a flock of sheep. They build up their fire, pour liquor down his throat and wrap him in fleeces. A meal of fresh mackerel and a few rounds of wine are followed by one of the most remarkable performances of dance in the pages of literature, starting with a pseudo-erotic *hasapiko* (bumpkin fun) and ending with a *tzeibekiko* of astonishing gravity, athleticism and grace.

"The downward gaze, the absorption, the precise placing of the feet, the sudden twirl of the body, the sinking on alternate knees, the sweep of an outstretched leg… with the arms all at once outflung in two radii as the dancer rose again in another slow circle, gathering pace till he spun for a few seconds at high speed and then slowed down in defiance of all the laws of momentum – these steps and passes and above all the downward scrutiny were as though the dancer were proving, on the fish scales and goats' droppings underfoot, some lost theorem about tangents and circles, or retracing the conclusions of Pythagoras."

The climax comes when the dancer picks up a circular wooden table *in his teeth*, whirling it around with perfect control before setting it down with cups and platters still in place. The account of this episode, among the fish scales and goats' droppings, leads into a lengthy enquiry about the origins of the *rebetiko* style, to which both the *hasapiko* (butcher's dance) and the *zeibekiko* (Turkish *zeybek*) belong. To PLF it represents "that amalgam of Greece and the Orient which is covered by the word 'Byzantine', appertaining to the city which was the heart and soul of the Greek world for a thousand years… For me these dances epitomize the last two hundred years of Byzantium, when the Empire, pillaged and dismembered by the Crusades, survived with the certainty of catastrophe looming at the end. The steps seem to symbolize all the artifice, the passion for complexity, the hair-splitting, the sophistication, the dejection, the sudden renaissances, the flaunting challenge, the resignation, the feeling of the enemy closing in, the abandonment by all who should have been friends, the ineluctability of the approaching doom and the determination to perish, when the time came, with style."

Penniless wayfarer, war hero, champion drinker and songster – these are configurations of the man in his time. Beyond them lies a unique capacity for the delicate transcription of imaginative thought and passionate attention into images and ideas that astonish and delight.



If it was a risk for an old man to revise the work of a younger self, it was a risk, too, for Nick Hunt, author of *Walking the Woods and the Water*, to follow in the footsteps of a man whose walks and words had become legendary. As a walker Nick Hunt did just fine: two-and-a-half thousand miles, two hundred and twenty days, with two pairs of trousers – one of them left in shreds on the summit of Romania's Mount Retezat – and a pair of boots that fell apart as he reached the Bosphorus. He had more ugliness to endure than PLF – not from bullies or brickbats, but from the peri-urban wastes, the detritus of building sites and the industrial sprawls. He had to walk too often on tarmac, and his ankles and shins blew up, as well they might. All he saw of Stuttgart was "a pile of rubble" and "a demolition zone enclosed by a chain-link fence". Munich looms

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in "a mass of towers bristling on a grey horizon".

Yet: "Europe's wilder edge seldom felt far away. Even in the most urban and industrialized countries of my walk, it took only a touch of snow to revive a sense of fairytale magic". Boars and bears still roamed the forests, and beavers were busy on the rivers. In every country he encountered "kindness and generosity that Paddy would have recognized". There weren't many picturesque little inns for a bob a night and no invitations to grand mansions, but a handy website provided him with a string of addresses where a free bed was available to foot travellers, "a modern expression of... an ancient tradition of hospitality".

In place of PLF's charcoal burners, cobblers and counts, Nick Hunt meets the folk of our late-capitalist age, with the links to the old cultures snapped by the experience of Soviet rule and the sudden, intense commodification of life that followed. "Everything is going to vanish!" PLF had written, and it wasn't far from the truth. The people offering beds by website are amiable and cheerful souls, looking to enliven their existence with unexpected visits. But the struggles of the post-communist Balkans to find their way in a Europe that elevates the avaricious have thrown up some unsavoury phenomena. In Bulgaria, "everyone is selfish here, obsessed by money", he is told. The *mutri* ("the nouveau-riche gangsters... the shock troops of free-market capitalism") ruled the roost in the 1990s and set the trend for what came later.

The most memorable section of the book is the passage through the Romanian mountains. Lost in deep snow, sodden by violent thunderstorms, mapless and trackless, the man battles admirably on. A tiny woodland couple give him a bed and a proper meal, but the next day the rain continues inexorably. Coincidentally, or not, the account of this adventure features the most Fermorian of his writing. "Cloud still clogged the valleys and the watercolour mountain peaks diminished in grey gradations... the swollen river funnelled between cracked and fissured cliffs, brightly veined with small cascades, and defiles led to mysterious ravines I felt a sudden sadness to think I would die without ever exploring. The world felt incomprehensibly large, full of unknowable secrets."

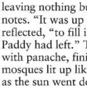
Perhaps it is for such insights that people undertake these formidable journeys, and perhaps Nick Hunt arrived at the Golden Horn knowing a closer kinship with his hero. PLF had seemingly run out of inspiration when he reached Istanbul, leaving nothing but a few bland notes. "It was up to me," Hunt reflected, "to fill in the gaps that Paddy had left." This he does with panache, finishing: "The mosques lit up like gentle grubs as the sun went down over Europe... the cry of the gulls was joined by the cry of minarets, the sound welling hugely over the city, merging the continents."

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

Eleanor Shelton

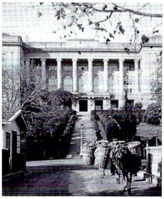
THE ANATOMY OF A TRADITION
150 years of Robert College 1863–2013

Edited by Cem Akaş
Istanbul Research Institute, £28.50



Seldom would a book about the 150th anniversary of a college preparatory school deserve a review – but this is no ordinary school and this is no ordinary book. Described by its editors as a catalogue and written by alumni, it covers not only the school's history but its place in national and international history, published alongside an exhibition last year at the Istanbul Research Institute, part of the Suna and İnan Kıraç Foundation.

In 1863 the United States was embroiled in the Civil War and paid little attention when a missionary named Cyrus Hamlin (a cousin of Abraham Lincoln's vice-president, Hannibal Hamlin) and Christopher Robert, a wealthy patron, established a school – not to evangelise, but to teach in a secular environment of higher learning.



ROBERT COLLEGE LEFT ITS 1863 RUMELIHISAR CAMPUS TO BOĞAZİÇİ UNIVERSITY IN 1971 AND MERGED WITH ARNAVUTKÖY'S AMERICAN COLLEGE FOR GIRLS, SEEN HERE

This innovative approach to education met with much resistance, but by the end of the first year the school's enrolment had risen from four students to 20. By 1866 there were 96 – from Armenia, Greece, Bulgaria, Turkey, Russia, France, Holland, Syria and Switzerland.

In the first essay, Ted Widmer, former speechwriter for Bill Clinton, *New York Times* contributor and a descendant of Hamlin, writes: "Above all Robert College has always been Turkish and American simultaneously, merging new educational ideas with an ancient setting, in a way that was unique within both traditions. In short, Robert College has been many things to many peoples over its century and a half."

The school has had a pivotal place in the history of the US, Turkey and the region. Past presidents have advised the US government on Turkish affairs; two graduates became prime ministers of Bulgaria, helping to found that country; and the school helped in the formation of "soft diplomacy" with the US before a formal diplomatic relationship was established. The college also brought the telegraph and basketball to Turkey.

Beyond the history of the school, this catalogue, in its collection of essays, touches on topics spanning the cultural and political transformation of Turkey, ranging from the Treaty of Lausanne and the possibility of bringing nuclear power to Turkey to changes in women's attitudes to marriage. There are fun personal memoirs, as well as essays on sport, architecture and engineering.

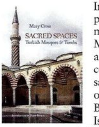
But perhaps it is the wonderful photos – from the late 1800s all the way to 2010 – that bring the history, educational plight and transformation to life, depicting the people, buildings and activity that made Robert College one of the most historically important schools in the world.

HIGHEST HEAVEN

Thomas Roueché

SACRED SPACES
Turkish Mosques & Tombs

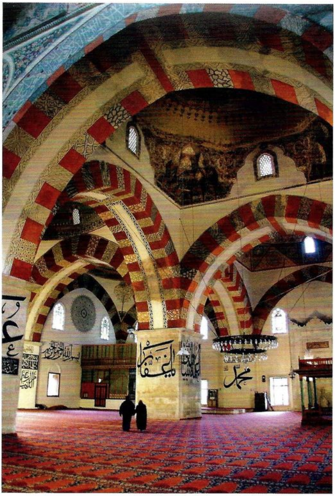
Mary Cross and Peter Brown
WW Norton & Co, £50



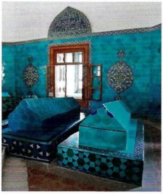
In this new photographic monograph, Mary Cross asks us to consider the sacred spaces of Edirne, Bursa and Istanbul – the great mosques of the grand Ottoman cities. Peter Brown, Rollins Professor of History at Princeton, graces this elegant book with an introduction that situates Cross's photography in the historical and spiritual context of the Ottoman period.

Drawing on the work of the astonishing Evliya Çelebi, Brown and Cross present the glorious mosques of the three imperial Ottoman cities afresh, challenging us to approach them on their own terms.

As Brown says, "Put briefly: in contrast to our own, largely vertical approach to the mosque, Sir Evliya insists that we also become Flatlanders. Indeed, for



Mary Cross's hallowed spaces
Above Edirne's Eski Cami, 1414
Below Bursa's Yeşil Türbe, 1421



him, a successful visit to a mosque involved a permanent tension between two directions of sight – the one starkly upward, as thrilling as any view of the towering columns of a Gothic church; the other, a more gentle searching out of beauty on the ground. We need to enter into this double vision."

Cross's elegant photography is uniquely suited to capturing the atmosphere and mood of these sacred spaces. However, her work goes beyond the mosques to the complexes that surround these glorious buildings. Brown comments: "The visitor is encouraged to walk around, to look at the buildings of the complex, and the great mosque that rises above them, from as many viewing points as possible, each of them surprising and delicious to the eye."

The masterful work of Sinan fills these pages. It is interesting to consider him in the context of his Western contemporary Palladio – indeed, "as a builder, he was a conscious rival to Michelangelo. He wished to build mosques as stupendous as Michelangelo's newly built church of St Peter's at Rome – and he succeeded."

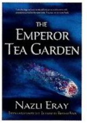
Brown and Cross throw down an intriguing gauntlet: it is precisely in their relationship to the sacred that these spaces must be considered. Faced with the domes of Sinan's masterworks, "we are looking up into the world of God and His angels. For that reason, Evliya and his contemporaries dearly loved a light-filled mosque. Not for them a pious gloom. On the contrary, they liked a mosque where the light of day streamed in through sparkling windows (not blocked by the dark glow of stained glass, as in a Gothic cathedral) in such a way as to drive the angels out of their concealment. For here was the highest heaven, revealed in its full blaze of glory – a heaven of pure light, from which the veil of the pale sky had, for a moment, been withdrawn."

LIVING THE DREAM

David Barchard

The Emperor Tea Garden

Nazlı Eray
Trans. Robert Finn; Syracuse University Press, £16.50



The dead come back to revisit lovers they never had. African violets talk and behave like human beings. Two of the protagonists travel across western Turkey, flying like birds from Ankara to Uşak and then on to Izmir. The night speaks. In the final pages, the novel itself gets up and becomes a character, shakes hands with the author, and goes out into the night.

Nazlı Eray's engaging short novel is probably like no other you have ever read – a fantasy, but one less like an imaginary world than a dream just a step away from real life. It is a dream about the pent-up feelings inside people for those they love and think about: fluid, constantly changing, inconsequential, but also somehow always authentically human and therefore moving.

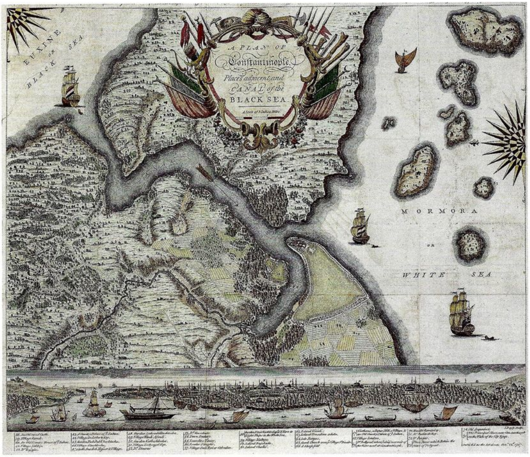
"Somebody in my sleep was calling an old name. The human memory is such a strange thing... between sleep and wakefulness... living and imagining," as one of her characters puts it.

The setting is middle-class Turkey, mostly in Ankara and Bartın. Though the background is Turkish, the people themselves, and their loves, griefs, hopes and disappointments, are universal, which is what makes them – to this reader at least – irresistible.

The plot is essentially that of an episodic dream in which people, places and moods change unpredictably, with little obvious causal connection between them, though the people the narrator meets as she is swept along are recognisable and glow with life.

More than half a century ago Dylan Thomas made a disparaging joke about the Turkish novel. Today, when so many leading Turkish novelists have been translated, Thomas's mockery is no longer possible. Nazlı Eray's spare, lucid Turkish has been meticulously translated by Robert Finn, capturing the sparkle, verve and abrupt directness of the original Turkish very well. Indeed, so human are the words and thoughts of the narrator (Eray herself), that periodic Turkish expressions and references become almost a surprise, for this seems to be a story that could happen anywhere.

Just occasionally Finn's translation hugs the Turkish original a little too closely. For example, people in English turn pale, not yellow, when alarmed. But these are small complaints. This singularly original book is a welcome addition to the stock of Turkish novels available in English, and one might wish that it had appeared under the imprint of a major publisher rather than a small American one. For *The Emperor Tea Garden* is a distinctively Turkish contribution to the canon of European literature, for which we should be grateful.


EUXINE or BLACK SEA
A PLAN OF Constantinople, Places adjacent, and CANAL of the BLACK SEA
MORMORA or WHITE SEA

The plan of Constantinople from Frederick Calvert's 'A Tour to the East' (1767) in its rare coloured state. Calvert, 6th and last Lord Baltimore, was vastly rich, but ended his days in exile and disgrace

CITY OF BOOKS

Philip Mansel

Impressions of Istanbul: Voyage to Constantinople 1493–1820
The Ömer Koç Collection, Volume 1
Text by Angus O'Neill
Introduction by Norman Stone
Vehbi Koç Foundation, £185

IMPRESSIONS OF ISTANBUL
VOYAGE TO CONSTANTINOPLE
1493–1820
THE ÖMER KOÇ COLLECTION

Some libraries are declarations of love. Ömer Koç's library of books on Istanbul and the Ottoman Empire, located in a house overlooking the Bosphorus, shows the authors' and the owner's love for the empire and its capital. The first of a three-volume catalogue, with an excellent text and descriptions of the books by Angus O'Neill, and a sparkling introduction by Norman Stone, in addition to a separate one-volume selection from the catalogue, have just been published.

Such was the fascination and accessibility of the Ottoman Empire that in the 16th century it inspired more books than the entire continent of America. France was the empire's principal European ally; most books are in French. They not only described the empire but also, read by monarchs and ministers, helped guide policies towards it. Books are politics.

Ambassadors inspired or commissioned some of the best books on Istanbul. Jacob Colyer was Dutch Resident in the Ottoman capital from 1668 to 1683, when he was succeeded by his son, who remained in the same post until 1725. In this catalogue, the entry for *Journal du voyage de Monsieur Colyer, Résident à la Porte pour Messieurs les Etats Généraux des Provinces Unies* (Paris 1672) contains the magic phrase (like many other catalogue entries) "not in Blackmer or Atabey" – meaning that the book is not mentioned in the catalogues of the celebrated libraries assembled by two recent collectors of books on the Ottoman Empire, Henry Blackmer and Şefik Atabey. Blackmer's and Atabey's were sale catalogues. Hopefully Omer Koç's records the foundation of an institution.

My own favourite among these magnificent books is Mouradgea d'Ohsson's *Tableau Général de l'Empire Othoman* (3 vols 1787–1820). It is illustrated by quantities of prints made from sketches done locally, transformed in Paris into finished drawings by Jean-Baptiste Hilair. The author was an Armenian Catholic dragoman to the Swedish embassy, who later became a Swedish noble. Researched in Istanbul – written and printed in Paris, and dedicated to Gustavus III, King of Sweden – the book is not only a superb analysis of Ottoman institutions and society, but also a trans-cultural political and religious statement of support for the Ottoman Empire.

A product of the three-sided alliance between France, Sweden and the Ottoman Empire, it promises that under a reforming sultan (such as Selim III, who became sultan in 1789) Islam can be regenerated and the Ottoman Empire revived. Events, however, contradicted the book's premise. The joint Swedish–Ottoman alliance against Russia in the war of 1788–92 led to yet another Ottoman defeat and Russian advance. Partly because of his reforms, Selim III was deposed in 1807 and assassinated in 1808.

The excellent photographs by Hadiye Cangökçe show that Ömer Koç's library also contains busts, manuscripts, medals, pictures, drawings, passports and photographs – all related to the Ottoman Empire. "Every aspiring collector should own this book," writes the London bookshop Heywood Hill. Every aspiring city should possess a library like this one. ◆

Philip Mansel's books include 'Sultans in Splendour: Monarchs of the Middle East 1869–1945'; 'Constantinople, City of the World's Desire'; and 'Levant: Splendour and Catastrophe on the Mediterranean'. He is currently writing a biography of Louis XIV

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PERA PALACE HOTEL
1892
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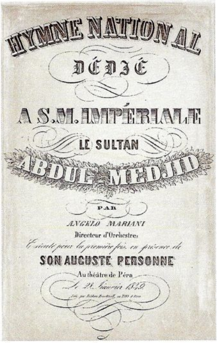
NIGHTS AT THE OPERA

With 19th-century Istanbul in thrall to the music of Italy, an extraordinary theatre was born, the creation of one rather 'odd character'. Emre Araci tells a tale of comedy and tragedy

By the 1830s, the ascending star of Italian opera was quite visible above the crescent of the East. Mahmud II had begun to pave the way for the influx of European culture amid a series of Western-style reforms following the tumult of the Auspicious Incident of 1826, when the corrupt and mutinous, once-elite janissaries were brutally disbanded. Now the sultan was to be seen processing along the streets of his imperial city to the strains of European marches, directed by his *maestro di musica*, Giuseppe Donizetti, eldest brother of the composer Gaetano Donizetti. Giuseppe became Donizetti Bey and eventually rose to the rank of pasha.

Mahmud delighted in Italian singing, and astonished the whole capital by attending an evening's entertainment given by the French ambassador, where he rapturously applauded the singers, "although he knew nothing of their language", according to a caustic report in *The Times*. The *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* lamented in July 1830: "We fear that he mistakes the vices and follies of Europe for its civilization."

In 1839 London society was informed by the journal *The Musical World* that Italian music had "become the rage among Mussulmans", and that there was "now a brilliant Italian opera at Constantinople". One Signora Edelina Fritsche, a young Milanese, gave singing lessons to Turkish ladies of fashion, making her rounds in a litter fitted out in crimson velvet and gold, carried by four black slaves and preceded and followed by eight more. The large and splendid theatre was crowded nightly, despite high admission charges. The Turks, "notwithstanding their usual habit of going to bed with the fowls", sat motionless till the end, often past midnight. Sultan Mahmud sometimes honoured the theatre with his presence, and also had Italian operas performed within the seraglio before the ladies of his court. The repertoire included Bellini's *La Straniera*, Meyerbeer's *Il Crociato in Egitto*, and Rossini's *L'Italiana in Algeri*, with the libretti strangely adapted to suit Turkish ideas. When *L'Italiana in Algeri* ended with the marriage of Isabella and the Bey and the punishment of poor Taddeo, who received the bastinado on the soles of his feet, it drew shouts of applause rather than laughter.



HYMNE NATIONAL

DÉDIÉ

A S.M. IMPÉRIALE

LE SULTAN

ABDUL-MEDJID

PAR

ANGELO MARIANI

Directeur d'Orchestre,

Exécuté pour la première fois, en présence de

SON AUGUSTE PERSONNE

Au théâtre de Péra

Le 28. Janvier 1849.

An anthem in the Italian operatic style, with text in Ottoman Turkish, presented to the sultan by the Naum Theatre's young conductor, Angelo Mariani

Bandmaster Giuseppe Donizetti Pasha, and Luigi Arditi, the artistic director

From 1841, a regular season started to take shape in Pera, home to the large Christian Levantine community. The early prosperity of the Tanzimat era brought great self-confidence to people who had been living for centuries in the meanest conditions in this district of palatial ambassadorial residences. Eager to turn their neighbourhood into a little Paris, the bankers, dragomans and diplomats backed the new opera venture at their own Théâtre de Péra, or Théâtre Bosco.

This was built by Bartolomeo Bosco, a magician, across from today's Galatasaray Lycée, on land belonging to the Christian Naum Duhanî family, tobacco dealers, originally from Aleppo. Bellini's *Norma* inaugurated the first season on November 18, 1841. But the management soon ran into financial difficulties. Not three years later the landowner, Michael Naum, joined in time by his brother Joseph, was persuaded to step in, and the Théâtre de Péra came to be known as Théâtre Italien Naum de Péra, or simply Théâtre Naum.

"An odd character" was how the *New York Times* would remember Michael Naum in his obituary in 1868. At a young age he had been recruited into the household of Lady Hester Stanhope, "Queen of the Desert", as dragoman. His duties included shaving his employer's head and making sieves from split reeds. On his return from Syria he found himself manufacturing fezzes under the patronage of Mahmud II.

In 1831 his mansion burned down in the great fire of Pera, and the land was leased to visiting troupes of entertainers before Bosco built his theatre. In 1844 Naum launched his career as impresario with Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia*. In 1846, *Ernani*, the first opera by a young Giuseppe Verdi to be performed in Istanbul, opened at his theatre, as musical trends in Italy were ardently followed in the Ottoman capital. Each season Naum would travel to Italy to engage new artistes and a full list of their names would grace the columns of the *Journal de Constantinople*.

The Théâtre Bosco was a makeshift wooden structure with a parterre and boxes. There were complaints about rattling doors, screeching floors and a lack of ventilation to deal with the heavy tobacco and oil-lamp smoke that engulfed the cramped auditorium. With many attempts to ban it, smoking remained a contentious issue throughout the theatre's existence. In 1847, just as the Naums were about to raise funds for a new, modern stone-built theatre, another catastrophic fire swept through the entire neighbourhood and with it the old stage. A petition was duly presented to the young Sultan Abdülmecid, and on the advice of his ministers a large subsidy was granted. The sultan also gave the Naums a 15-year monopoly to bring Italian opera to Istanbul, and granted an allowance to artistes made homeless by the fire.

Although the only surviving plan for the new Naum Theatre is by Giuseppe Fossati, the commission for building the new structure went to William James Smith, who was also at the time building Pera House, the new British Embassy round the corner.

Naum's theatre, with two tiers of boxes and a gallery, was spacious and modern. Its interior was white with gold reliefs and

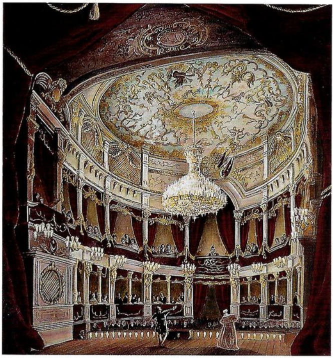
EMRE ARACI COLLECTION

featured on the auditorium ceiling large medallion portraits of famous European composers, which encircled a chandelier of 42 candles, manufactured in London. There was a sumptuous box for the sultan, with a private entrance from the street. The Naum Theatre opened on November 4, 1848 with Verdi's *Macbeth*, directed by the company's young conductor, Angelo Mariani, destined to become one of Italy's greatest maestros. Giuseppe Donizetti, who was in the audience, praised the performance in a letter to a friend in Italy, and a few days later the sultan turned up to inspect the building. When he visited again a few months later, the company greeted him with an *hymne national* composed especially by Mariani, in the Italian operatic style, with a text in Ottoman Turkish, which the chorus and soloists were trained to sing phonetically.

The Naum Theatre was soon a centre of socialising, gossip and spectacle. Ladies in glittering costumes arrived in sedan chairs (in vogue in Istanbul well into the late 19th century), and grand costume balls were held every year during the Mardi Gras season. Gustave Flaubert came to see *Lucia di Lammermoor* in 1850 and evoked the scene in *Madame Bovary*, relocating it to Rouen Opera House. Adelaide Ristori, the Italian tragedienne, starred in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Henryk Wieniawski played Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto. Pablo de Sarasate also performed here on a concert tour.

Naum was eager to cater not only to the Levantine community but also to the Muslim population. Advertisements appeared in the Turkish press, and Friday matinées were scheduled after midday prayers, while libretti were translated and printed in Turkish. When Donizetti's *Belisario* was performed at the apartment of the Valide Sultan (Queen Mother) – the theatre's artistes were often invited for private performances at court – *The Times* described how "the ladies listened very earnestly during the performance, and perused the books with great attention. The sympathy of one was strongly excited by the appearance of blind Belisario, and she became so moved by the representation of his distress, that she started up suddenly, and with expression of pity threw a purse full of gold at him."

But operatic life was not always so amicable. Tempestuous rivalries between prima donnas were common, dividing audiences and resulting in fights. At one performance in 1851 a murder was committed after scuffles between supporters of the leading sopranos Marcella Lotti della Santa and Rosina Penco, and the theatre was closed.



ABDÜLMECİD'S OWN OPERA HOUSE AT DOLMABAHÇE, OPENED IN 1859

AYŞE TÜREMIŞ, AFTER 'L'ILLUSTRATION' / EMRE ARACI COLLECTION

When the Crimean War produced the first war journalism as we know it, Istanbul was suddenly brought to the attention of the world's press and Naum's became the butt of foreign reporters in search of amusing stories for their readers back home. "I cannot say that the opera of Pera absolutely claims a visit from the connoisseur," sneered the Roving Englishman column in Charles Dickens's weekly magazine *Household Words*. "There is an unhealthy smell of dead rats about it; a prevailing dampness and dinginess; a curious fog; a loudness; a dirtiness, which induces me generally to prefer an arm chair and a dictionary, a cup of tea and a fire." He went on to ridicule "an English autumnal prima donna… tearing one of Verdi's operas into shreds, and screaming in a manner which is inconceivably ear-piercing".

Though standards were not comparable to those of La Scala or Covent Garden, the Naum Theatre nevertheless employed artistes and directors from both, to give the public the best talent it could afford. When *La Traviata* was premiered in the 1856–57 season, Violetta was sung by Fanny Salvini-Donatelli, for whom Verdi had created the role and who had performed it for the world premiere at Venice's La Fenice.

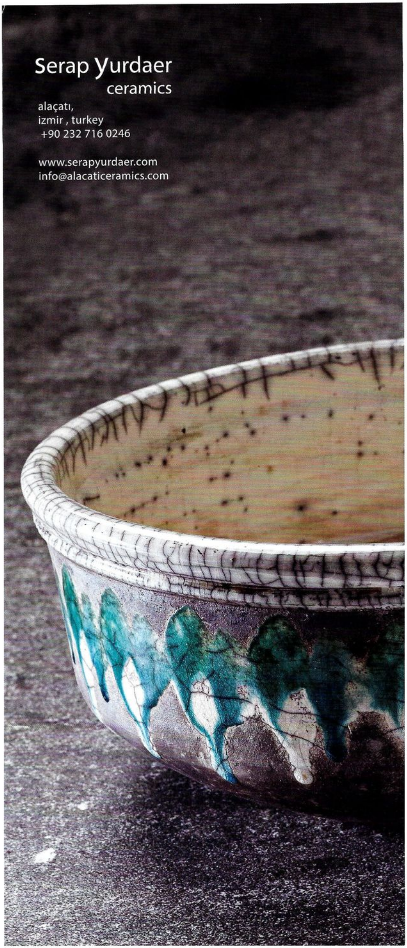
In the same season Luigi Arditi, who went on to conduct at Covent Garden and Her Majesty's Theatre in London, was engaged as artistic director. He had turned down offers from the Teatro de Oriente in Madrid and the Teatro Regio in Turin. His American wife, Virginia, wrote to her mother: "The brothers Naum… have become sincerely attached to Luigi already. They are doing all they can to make us comfortable, but we are surrounded by a fearfully rowdy set of Italians, who are capable of any outrage if Luigi does not accede to their demands." In 1857, the Naums installed gas lighting, and five years later a further tier of boxes brought audience capacity to a thousand.

In April 1869 Abdülaziz played host to the future Edward VII and Queen Alexandra on their state visit, for a gala performance of Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine*, vividly remembered by William Howard Russell of *The Times* in his memoirs: "The Princess was beautifully dressed; the Prince and suite were in full uniform. On their entering the state box… the audience rose, and it needed an effort to believe we were in Constantinople, so brilliant and Europeanised was the spectacle… The Sultan, who looked very solemn and stately in his gilt clothing bepatched with diamond stars and orders, sat between the Prince and Princess, and the Grand Vizier stood behind his chair."

A few months later another state visit brought the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph to the theatre, though Empress Eugénie of France was too tired, after a day of engagements and sightseeing, to attend the performance prepared in her honour.

The end came for Pera's famous opera house on June 5, 1870, when another fire swept away everything in its path from Taksim to Galatasaray. Within hours the theatre was reduced to ashes, with scraps of scenery and curtain flying off as far as Yeşilköy. Michael Naum was spared witnessing the destruction, for he had died two years earlier to the very day. In the hustle and bustle of today's Beyoğlu, Çiçek Pasajı commemorates the theatre with a simple marble plaque on its façade. ◆

Dr Emre Aracı is a composer and musical historian. His history of Italian opera in 19th-century Istanbul, 'Naum Tiyatrosu: 19.Yüzyıl İstanbul'un İtalyan Operası', is published in Turkish by Yapı Kredi. His CDs and his latest books, 'Yusuf Ağa Efendi, The First Turkish Ambassador in 18th-century London' and 'Elgar in Turkey' (Pera Museum), are available from cornucopia.net



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New blood, old masters

By Tim Cornwell

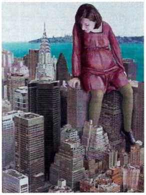
The doors of the new Museum of Painting and Sculpture opened briefly in May, offering a tantalising glimpse of the great collection to be housed there. The ground floor has displays of the new building's architecture, a striking blocky design inspired by shipping containers appearing to stick out like Lego bricks. An alarming future panorama showed four toy-like cruise liners tied up at Karaköy and Fındıklı. Upstairs, alongside a formidable array of Turkish greats – Osman Hamdi Bey, Şeker Ahmed Pasha, Ibrahim Çallı – were wonderfully expert copies by students of European Old Masters. Chardin, Lorrain, a Frans Hals *Gypsy Girl*… The gallery will show a changing selection; surprisingly, this first was rolled out with no dates or descriptions beyond artist and title.

With entrepreneurial Syrians already setting up shop in Turkey, one can anticipate new Syrian talents making their mark on Istanbul's visual arts scene. SALT has already staged a discussion on Syrian film-makers featuring at Sundance and Cannes. Turkish art has long been shaped by war and its migrations, says the veteran painter Mehmet Güleryüz. Likened (at least by his promoters) to a Picasso, Güleryüz is set for a retrospective at Istanbul Modern early next year. From Ottoman times new arrivals from "countries we used to govern gave us new energy, different ways of looking", he says. The tolerance shown by the Conqueror paved the way for a society that at its best created "a structure you could join as you cared to; you didn't necessarily have to be assimilated".

Even the Crimean War, says Güleryüz, was a catalyst for Turkish art. Perhaps one could include the German art historians so influential in Istanbul's art colleges after the Second World War, bringing Bauhaus to bear on the city's design giant Autoban, for example.

In a chat with Güleryüz at his son Kerimcan's Empire Project, we tried to categorise contemporary galleries for a visiting buyer. For photography, say, Empire or Elipsis; for conceptual, Rodeo or Galeri Non. Art here, like the city, is shaped by cross-currents: the pull of Western contemporary, Islamic abstraction and calligraphy, the influence of Sufism. Older painters and sculptors grumble over the cash and attention lavished on contemporary fads; to be a figurative artist was once a protest in itself.

But Turkish art is once again being shaped by raw political experience. In the back streets of upmarket Bebek you find the work of artists such as Nur Gürel (above), whose recent show, *Kuşatma* (*The Siege)*, at Artgalerim featured giant young women perched on office blocks like park benches, giant towels draped on the arms of cranes – a Gulliver-like essay on urban growth. In almost every Istanbul artist's studio, it seems you'll find a canvas reflecting a fear of doors closing, landscapes being remade. Güleryüz says, dryly, that today's wary state of mind is captured by the enigmatic title of his 2008 painting *Ümitliyim – I'm Hopeful.* ◆



Tim Cornwell is a freelance journalist and arts writer; tim.cornwell@hotmail.com. For online gallery walks cornucopia.net/blog

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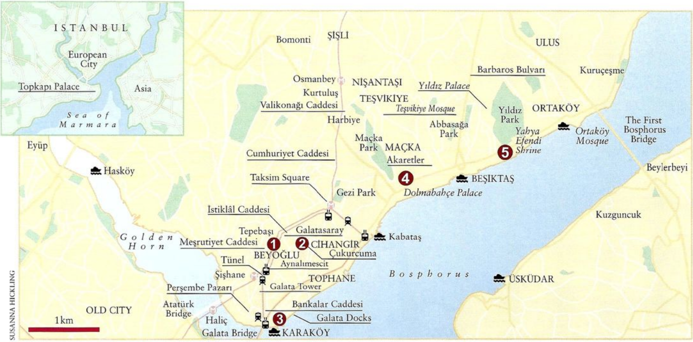
Polychrome, underglaze-painted, stoneware Iznik plate.
Photograph by Fritz von der Schulenburg

ISTANBUL UNWRAPPED

PART TWO: THE EUROPEAN CITY AND THE SULTAN'S NEW CITY

The second part of our GUIDE TO ISTANBUL celebrates the European city – the old diplomatic and banking districts – and the new Western imperial city built by the sultans in the 19th century along the Bosphorus and up in the hills

Contributions by Andrew Finkel, Tim Cornwell, Malika Browne, Rose Shepherd, Susana Raby, Thomas Roueché, Victoria Khroundina, Tony Barrell, Hilary Stafford-Clark


ISTANBUL
European City
Topkapı Palace
Asia
Sea of Marmara
Bomonti
ŞİŞLİ
ULUS
Barbaros Bulvarı
Kuruçeşme
Osmanbey
NİŞANTAŞI
Yıldız Palace
Kurtuluş
TEŞVİKİYE
Valikonağı Caddesi
Teşvikiye Mosque
Yıldız Park
ORTAKÖY
Harbiye
Abbasağa Park
Yahya Efendi Shrine
Ortaköy Mosque
The First Bosphorus Bridge
Eyüp
Maçka Park
MAÇKA
5
Cumhuriyet Caddesi
Akaretler
Beylerbeyi
Hasköy
4
BEŞİKTAŞ
Taksim Square
Gezi Park
Dolmabahçe Palace
İstiklâl Caddesi
Kuzguncuk
Tepebaşı
Galatasaray
Golden Horn
Meşrutiyet Caddesi
1
2
CİHANGİR
Kabataş
BEYOĞLU
Çukurcuma
Tünel
Aynalımescit
Şişhane
TOPHANE
Bosphorus
ÜSKÜDAR
Perşembe Pazarı
Galata Tower
OLD CITY
Atatürk Bridge
Bankalar Caddesi
1km
Haliç
3
Galata Docks
Galata Bridge
KARAKÖY

SUSANNA HICKLING

THE EUROPEAN CITY

BEYOĞLU

❶ Dive into Beyoğlu, quarter of louche hangouts, handmade hats, downtown dervishes and the Nostaljik tram

CİHANGİR AND ÇUKURCUMA

❷ Linger over a cocktail in Istanbul's latterday Bohemia, with its streets of antique shops and designer finds

KARAKÖY AND TOPHANE

❸ Meet new arts and old artisans in the burgeoning, but still gloriously grungy, new Galata Docklands

THE SULTAN'S NEW CITY

DOLMABAHÇE AND NİŞANTAŞI

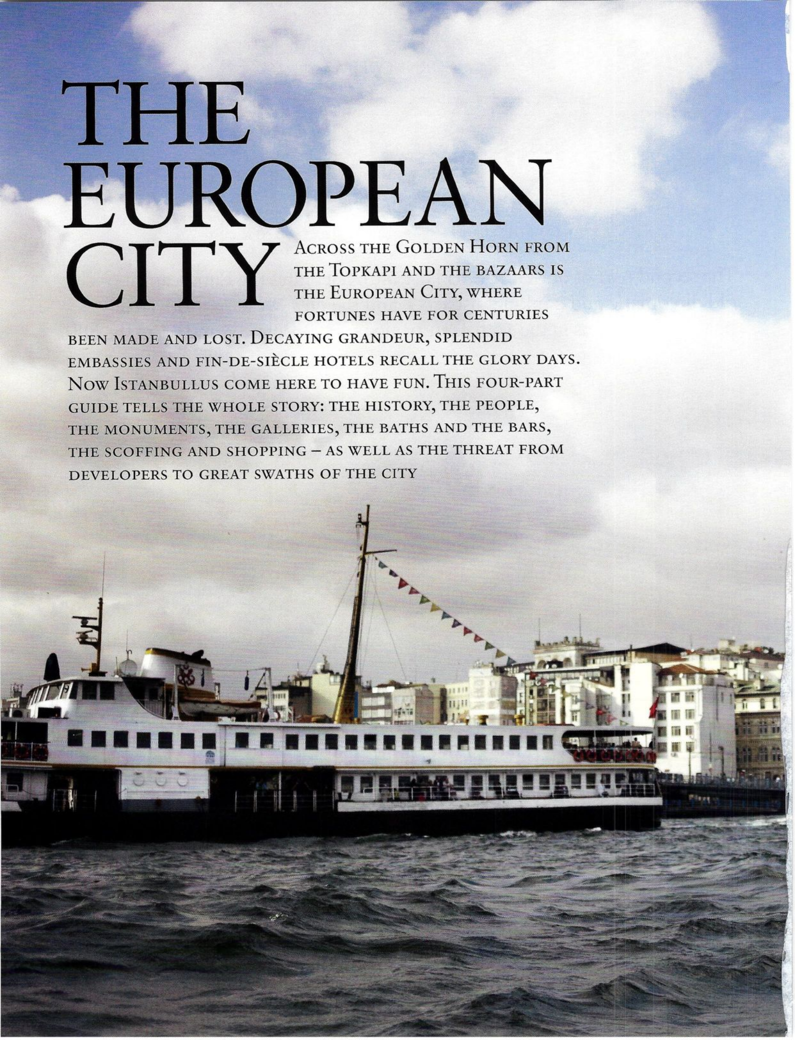
❹ Step ashore to admire the breezy new city, where sultans dreamt of Europe and gilded youth can gorge on Gucci

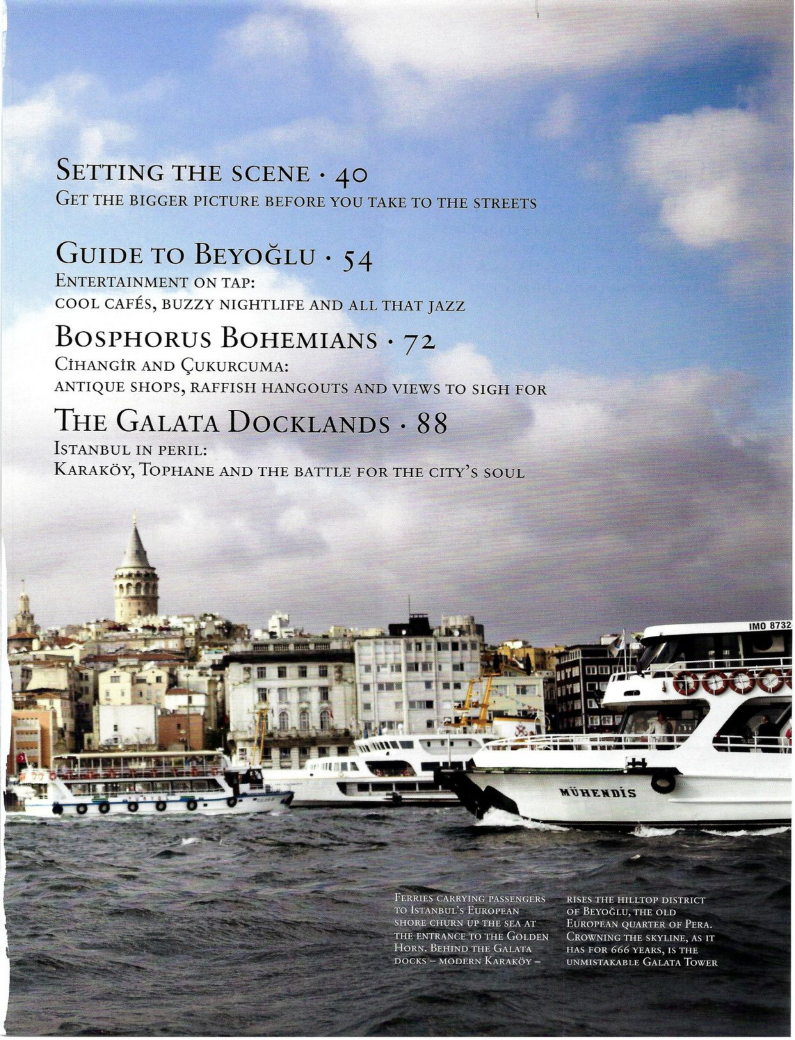
BEŞİKTAŞ AND ORTAKÖY

❺ Cheer for the eagles, climb the streets for royal retreats, have a ball at the seaside, dine by the water, sail into the sunset

THE EUROPEAN CITY

Across the Golden Horn from the Topkapi and the bazaars is the European City, where fortunes have for centuries been made and lost. Decaying grandeur, splendid embassies and fin-de-siècle hotels recall the glory days. Now Istanbullus come here to have fun. This four-part guide tells the whole story: the history, the people, the monuments, the galleries, the baths and the bars, the scoffing and shopping – as well as the threat from developers to great swaths of the city





Setting the scene · 40
Get the bigger picture before you take to the streets

Guide to Beyoğlu · 54
Entertainment on tap:
cool cafés, buzzy nightlife and all that jazz

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Cihangir and Çukurcuma:
antique shops, raffish hangouts and views to sigh for

The Galata Docklands · 88
Istanbul in peril:
Karaköy, Tophane and the battle for the city's soul

Ferries carrying passengers to Istanbul's European shore churn up the sea at the entrance to the Golden Horn. Behind the Galata docks – modern Karaköy – rises the hilltop district of Beyoğlu, the old European quarter of Pera. Crowning the skyline, as it has for 666 years, is the unmistakable Galata Tower

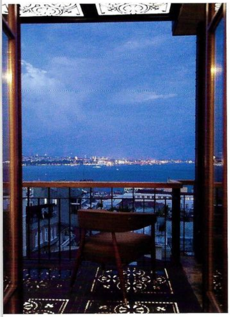
BACK TO THE FUTURE

THE EUROPEAN CITY IS EXPERIENCING A RENAISSANCE THAT RECALLS ITS HEYDAY AS A CENTRE BASKING IN POWER AND ROLLING IN MONEY. IT HAS ITS SEEDY SIDE, BUT IT IS CERTAINLY ON THE MOVE

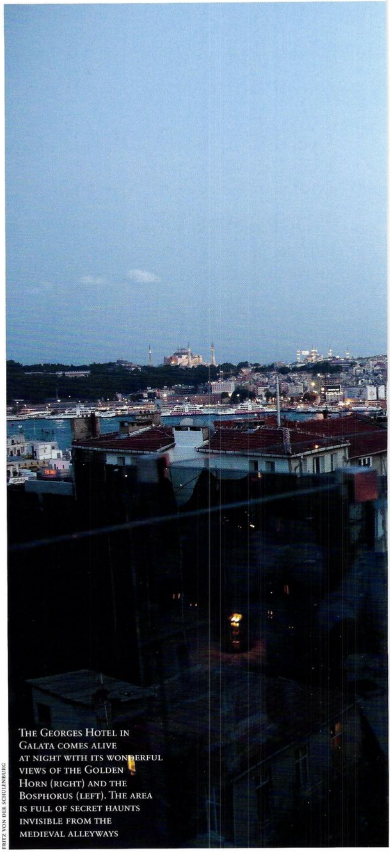
Profit has ruled in Istanbul's European quarter since the Middle Ages, when the Italians set up shop here – and seems destined to rule again. Beyoğlu (or Pera, as it is still sometimes called), a 19th-century hilltop city built by bankers, merchants and their nations with the lucre earned in the Galata docks below, has seen its fortunes rise and fall as capriciously as a Bosphorus barometer. Set fair? Stormy? Not everyone is happy with the pace of change today. Antique streets are being torn down or gutted, under pressure from the booming hotel trade and skyrocketing property prices. The artisans, cinemas, galleries and bookshops that dotted Tünel and İstiklâl Caddesi are seeking cheaper quarters in Tophane and elsewhere.

The result is a place of contrasts. One minute you find a hothouse of new styles, music and fast living, the playground of a generation as creative and witty as any in recent Turkish memory. But turn a corner, and that gives way to a desolating cityscape of abandoned apartments and desperate drinking holes, and hotels that have been padlocked by authorities eager to call in the bulldozers and start again.

Last summer, Beyoğlu was on the brink as angry protesters took to the streets. Little wonder that hotel bookings fell a full 70 per cent. But longer-term, such escapades only ratchet up the fascination of these disparate quarters.

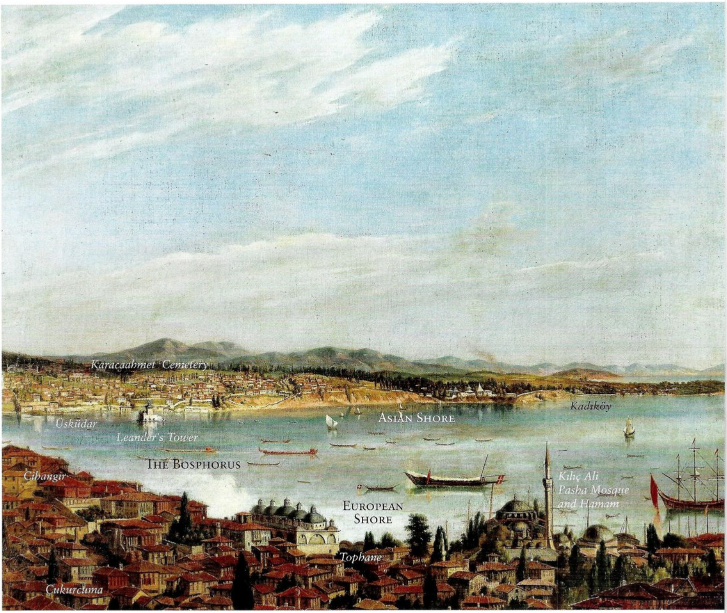


FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG



THE GEORGES HOTEL IN GALATA COMES ALIVE AT NIGHT WITH ITS WONDERFUL VIEWS OF THE GOLDEN HORN (RIGHT) AND THE BOSPHORUS (LEFT). THE AREA IS FULL OF SECRET HAUNTS INVISIBLE FROM THE MEDIEVAL ALLEYWAYS

FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG



CRY, THE BELOVED CITY

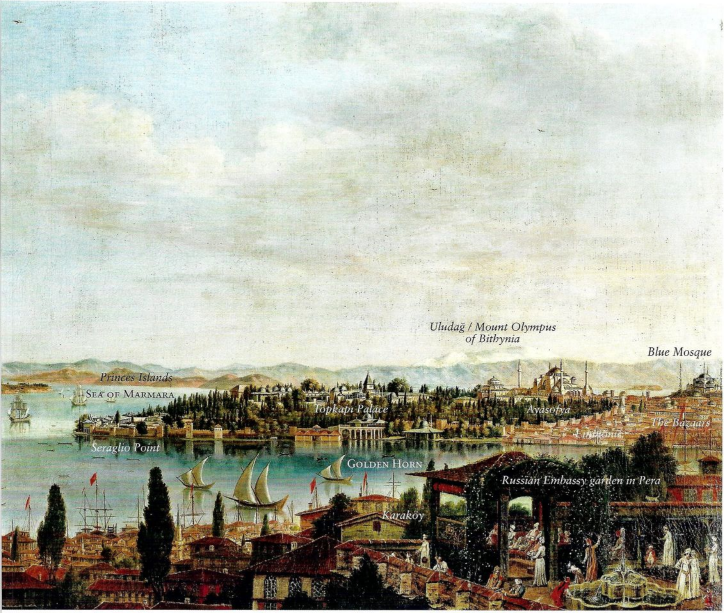
This sweeping panorama of Istanbul, painted in the 1770s by the Chevalier Antoine de Favray, and a key work in the collection of the Pera Museum, shows the familiar landmarks of Istanbul, many of them still visible today. Leander's Tower, or the Maiden's Tower (Kız Kulesi), where the Bosphorus flows into the Sea of Marmara, is remarkably unchanged. On the European side we see the perky turreted domes of the Tophane Foundry, where cannons were made for the Ottoman fleet, and nearby the Kılıç Ali Pasha Mosque, completed by Sinan in his nineties. Most of all, it shows the unchanged glories of Seraglio Point (Sarayburnu): the Topkapı, Ayasofya, the Blue Mosque.

Like other Western artists, de Favray is thought to have painted his panorama from the safety of the European embassies in Pera, in particular the Russian Palace, whose gardens appear in the foreground.

These days the views can be enjoyed at leisure from countless restaurants, notably the new Divan on İstiklâl Caddesi or the Leb-i Derya in Kumbaracı Yokuşu. But a few minutes' walk from the Pera Museum you can find an unrivalled vantage point.

Go early on a Sunday to beat the rush for what has been the greatest vista of the greatest city in the world since it was built by the Genoese in 1348. The Galata Tower, begun 70-odd years after the Tower of Pisa, is very much open to the public, and has kept its stunning outlooks.

A startlingly small, jouncing lift car will take you almost to the top. As you begin the clockwise walk round the worn stone of the balustrade, a first glance takes in distant skyscrapers, a cruise ship or two, the Bosphorus Bridge. Tophane is still in sight, and there's the Kılıç Ali Pasha. Although the Asian side is carpeted in buildings, you can still make out the cypress trees of the Karacaahmet Cemetery. On the shoreline at Karaköy is the straight modernist tower of the Yolcu Salonu, the entry point for ship



PERA MUSEUM, ISTANBUL

passengers since 1937. It is among the buildings slated for the wrecking ball as part of the multi-billion-euro Galataport Project.

Closer landmarks include the eccentric tower and buttresses of the British Seamen's Hospital, where you'll find anchors in the cobbles of the courtyard. Despite the shoreline development, and sometimes a warship parked in front of it, Seraglio Point remains a green island. The Aqueduct of Valens is distantly in sight. On the Golden Horn is the new metro bridge, with its ridiculous horns; and beyond, an urban sprawl that disappears into the distance.

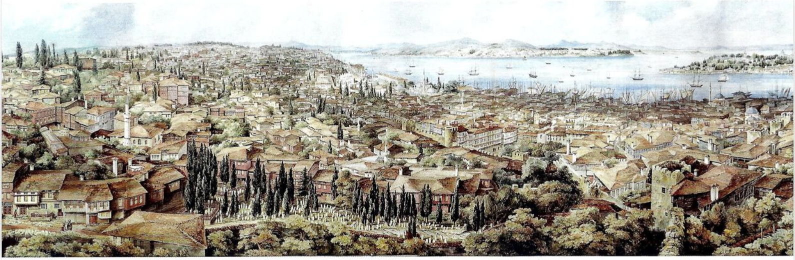
Beyoğlu has long been portrayed as Turkey's dream of Paris. The district is characterised by Neo-Gothic churches, palatial embassies, French-style passages and Italian Art Nouveau architecture. For decades, it has also been an escape valve for Turkey, a place of misfits and drifters, famous for nightclubs, music and drugs. Any new visitor to Istanbul is swept up in its breathless magic. This makes it hard for an outsider to comprehend the scale and speed of the change that is afoot here, and the conservation battles being fought.

THE VIEW FROM BEYOĞLU, 1773
ON THE LEFT OF ANTOINE DE FAVRAY'S VIEW, SMOKE ISSUES FROM THE TOPHANE FOUNDRY. ON THE ASIAN SHORE ÜSKÜDAR IS CAPPED WITH CYPRESSES. THE PRINCES ISLANDS LIE BEYOND SERAGLIO POINT. SNOW-CAPPED MT OLYMPUS OF BITHYNIA (ULUDAĞ) IS VISIBLE ABOVE AYASOFYA

It is inevitable that desirable districts become gentrified, that art galleries replace cobblers' shops, and that chains colonise great shopping streets. Rising incomes and new tourism will mean that some areas become safe and habitable. But there also seems to be a fight for Istanbul's soul.

No matter how it was plundered or pillaged in the past, Istanbul maintained its natural splendour. Beyoğlu was reborn after earthquake and fire to produce a mesmerising variety of architectural styles. Now the city's fabric is being torn apart by a new generation who are demolishing the old buildings. New Istanbullus need living space, but unfettered construction is turning the city of domes into a sea of concrete.

Tim Cornwell



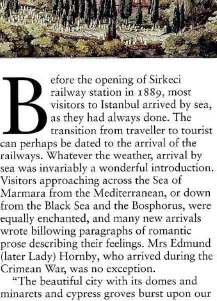
STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND

UNTIL THE 20TH CENTURY, VISITORS WOULD SAIL SERENELY INTO ISTANBUL TO DISEMBARK OPPOSITE THE TOPKAPI. AFTER THIS SPECTACULAR START, REALITY WOULD SET IN.

BY DAVID BARCHARD

Before the opening of Sirkeci railway station in 1889, most visitors to Istanbul arrived by sea, as they had always done. The transition from traveller to tourist can perhaps be dated to the arrival of the railways. Whatever the weather, arrival by sea was invariably a wonderful introduction. Visitors approaching across the Sea of Marmara from the Mediterranean, or down from the Black Sea and the Bosphorus, were equally enchanted, and many new arrivals wrote billowing paragraphs of romantic prose describing their feelings. Mrs Edmund (later Lady) Hornby, who arrived during the Crimean War, was no exception.

"The beautiful city with its domes and minarets and cypress groves burst upon our charmed sight… 'A fine government might here guide or rule the world,' is one of your first thoughts," she wrote. "Long we stood delighted upon the deck, first turning our eyes upon beautiful Stamboul with its crowning mosque of Santa Sophia and lofty minarets. But all this must be seen to be believed in, and then you will think it a dream."


South Eastern Railway. London-Chatam-Dover Railway
CHEMINS DE FER DU NORD & DE L'EST DE FRANCE
LONDRES-PARIS-CONSTANTINOPLE
PARIS-MUNICH-VIENNE-BUDAPEST-BELGRADE & CONSTANTINOPLE
PARIS & BUKAREST
ORIENT EXPRESS
LONDRES-PARIS-VIENNE
PARIS-CONSTANTINOPLE
PARIS-BUKAREST

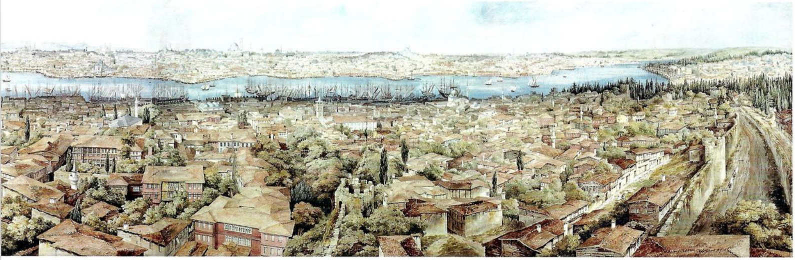
The dream ended abruptly for Mrs Hornby and other new arrivals when she stepped ashore and saw a swath of shabby wooden houses stretching up the hillside in front of her. But this was relatively new. A quarter of a century earlier, when Charles MacFarlane landed at Tophane in 1828 on the first steamship ever to arrive in Istanbul, he found the area empty and depopulated. Some houses were marked with red signs. These were the former homes of Catholic Armenians whom the sultan had exiled to Ankara, where some of their descendants survive to this day. But from the 1830s the hillside's population began to swell.

The immediate task facing all new arrivals was to get themselves and their baggage up Galata Hill, "the hill of the infidels", as it was known in the 19th century. Even with the assistance of flunkies and retainers it was a painful journey. Ottoman Greeks and Armenians lived on its slopes. At the top, in Pera, or Beyoğlu, were the Europeans and their embassies. Through Pera stretched "the long road", which would evolve into the Grand' Rue de Pera in the last quarter of the 19th century, and then into today's İstiklâl Caddesi.

Before the 1870s there were no proper roads, and even today going directly from the shore of the Bosphorus or the Golden Horn up to Galata involves a steep climb. The roads came with construction work begun under the Westernising, reformist Tanzimat pashas of the 1860s. Moreover, until about 1865 a further problem faced the new arrival: Galata was still a walled city. That year reformers pulled down the old Genoese walls, perhaps regrettably, but it made the journey up to Pera a lot easier.

TOP In his panorama in the Naval Museum in Beşiktaş, the Glaswegian watercolourist Aston Barker, who visited Istanbul in 1799, is absorbed by the soon-to-vanish world of wooden houses and gardens. On the right, rope for ships is twisted in the 'hendek' (ditch) below the walls, later demolished
RIGHT The Orient Express arrived in 1889
OPPOSITE Karaköy's industrial port, 1900; the artist David Wilkie's portrait of his Pera landlady, Madame Josephine, owner of the Hotel Constantinople, in 1843

THE ISTANBUL NAVAL MUSEUM COLLECTION



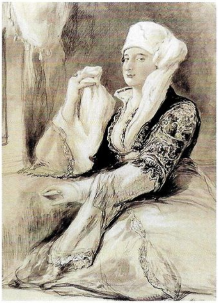
SUREYYA ÜZMEZLER ARCHIVE

From 1875 passengers arriving at the quayside in Tophane or Karaköy no longer faced a climb, for in January that year the Istanbul Tünel opened. It was, and is, a one-stop metro line (more accurately a subterranean funicular) taking passengers up to Galatasaray. The contract for its construction had been signed with a French engineer, Eugène Henri Gavand, by the Tanzimat pashas in their final years. But, as with almost all their projects, it took years to turn into reality. Today it seems a rather quaint affair, but it must have been a boon to people living in Beyoğlu back then.

Zeynep Çelik, the historian of 19th-century Istanbul, writes that Yüksek Kaldırım (the narrow lane leading up the hill) was by then trodden by 40,000 pedestrians a day. Nevertheless, as late as 1895 a guidebook could still state: "With two or three exceptions, the streets of Constantinople are but little better than narrow, crooked, wretchedly-paved, and dirty alleys, teeming with mangy, snarling pariah dogs and garbage, upon which these latter feed. Footpaths there are none, except along part of one or two of the principal streets; and pedestrians have to pick their way as best they can among the ceaseless throng of carriages, carts, horses, porters, pack animals, and over the above-mentioned ubiquitous pariah curs."

Everyone complained about the dogs in Galata. "The howlings of a thousand dogs, re-echoing through the deserted nights, chase you betimes from your pillow," wrote John Murray in 1840. And the Prussian diplomat and writer Friedrich Tietz had written a dozen years earlier: "Nowhere in the world probably is so great a multitude of dogs to be seen as at Constantinople." He noticed that Turkish households threw out food for the animals and even made arrangements in their wills for dogs to be fed. "Hence the streets are constantly dirty." Although kindly householders even put out straw and kennels for stray mothers in pup, "the character of these dogs (which are of a most peculiar kind, resembling shepherd dogs) is not of the most amiable. During sunshine they lie down in the streets and are no small inconvenience to passers by".

Apart from the dogs, there were also the loose women. Most visitors seem to have turned their eyes away. But they were there even before the economic life of the area began to quicken. In 1833 Tietz noticed dancers whom he was assured were



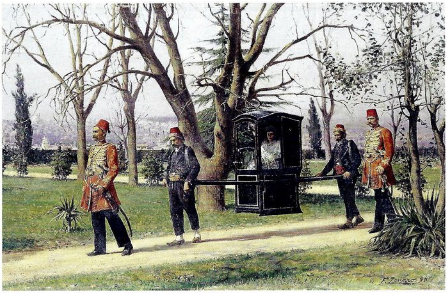
"priestesses of Venus of whom there are said to be a great number here". It took about 150 years for the priestesses to vanish and make way for today's tourist eating places in the side streets.

Today Istanbul is a city of noise and bustle, but in the first half of the 19th century the thing that surprised visitors from Western Europe was its silence. There were no carts or carriages rattling through streets for, as the John Murray guide put it in 1840, "there are no wheeled vehicles, in the city, except a very few painted carts called *arabahs* and drawn by buffaloes" in which women took the air.

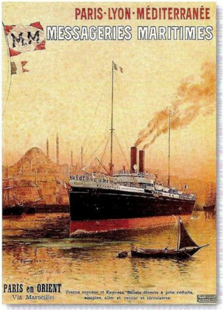
Attitudes to visitors changed as the century progressed and the European element of the city's life and culture became more pronounced. Charles MacFarlane, visiting in 1828 when tensions were high because of European military support to the Greek War of Independence, thought the Muslim population very unfriendly to foreigners. Returning 20 years later he found the tension had disappeared.

The early-19th-century Golden Horn was full of visiting ships, yet Galata was still much as it had been in the previous century: a pre-industrial, pre-modern community. But now a new era saw the arrival of Western technology and lifestyles, and swifter communication. It wasn't just travellers: Europe itself was arriving on the Golden Horn.

By the time Mrs Hornby arrived in 1855, Istanbul had two bridges over the Golden Horn. No such thing had ever existed in earlier centuries. The first of these was a pontoon bridge, which Mrs Hornby rather scornfully dismisses as "a bridge of boats", but which enabled people to walk from Pera to the Old City. It was put up by "Hain" Ahmet Fevzi Pasha ("Traitor" Ahmet Fevzi Pasha) in 1836. Ahmet Pasha, the Lord High Admiral, had been given a gold sabre by the sultan for his work, but on Mahmud II's death in the summer of 1839 the admiral and his navy had deserted to Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Pasha of Egypt.



PERA MUSEUM


PARIS·LYON·MÉDITERRANÉE
MM
MESSAGERIES MARITIMES
PARIS en ORIENT
(Via Marseille)
Trains rapides et Express. Billets directs à prix réduits, simples, aller et retour et circulaires.

For Mrs Hornby, Galata was still a city of wooden houses that frequently burned down. Building in stone was the prerogative of the sultan – and when Keçecizade Fuad Pasha built himself a stone house, the first Ottoman official ever to do so, he was rebuked by the sultan (despite the fact that the pasha's home had twice burned down). But in the late 19th century stone buildings arose everywhere in Pera – many being built, or possibly reconstructed, after the 1892 earthquake, as inscriptions on them still testify.

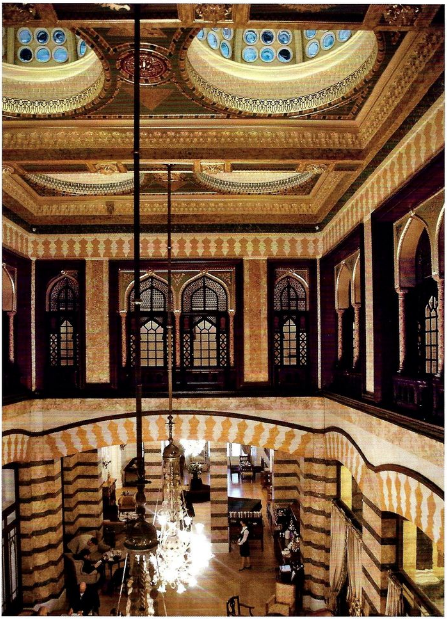
Visitors needed somewhere to stay. Lady Hornby and her husband, as official visitors (Edmund Hornby being a financial commissioner), were put up by the British Embassy (though the original building had burned down in 1831). And in 1828 Charles MacFarlane had found lodgings with a consular official, Mr Zohrab. By 1840 there was a clutch of pensions and boarding houses, mostly Italian-run, their ground floors usually taken up with billiard rooms occupied by Armenians wearing black trousers.

"There is no place where a good hotel is more required or would better repay the proprietors," observed the John Murray guide rather sniffily, recommending the Eccles Pension, an English boarding house. Staying at these places was not a very jolly experience. Travellers who had probably already spent a week in a lazaretto, or quarantine station, still had to go through a "smoke-box" intended to fumigate them against the plague each time they entered their lodgings. Even so, plague made its way through the doors. One early traveller staying at the Hôtel d'Europe stood at his window drinking in the view until the smile on his face was wiped away by the sight of a plague corpse being carried through the door below him.

As the years moved on, a number of real hotels began to appear. The most famous, at least for British travellers, was the Hôtel d'Angleterre, set up in 1841 by James Misseri, a Levantine who served the writer Alexander Kinglake as guide and interpreter in his travel book *Eothen*. In 1855 there was the Hôtel des Ambassadeurs, and by the 1890s (by which time the Orient Express had opened up the market) there was a wide range of hotels.

The food served in them grew better and more cosmopolitan as the century went on. In those days a visitor could expect platefuls of fresh Bosphorus oysters (still occasionally available to the foolhardy until the 1980s). And there was red mullet. In fact sometimes there was little else but red mullet. David Christie Murray, a former British army officer arriving as a correspondent for the *Chicago Times* in the 1877 Turco–Russian War, was impressed by his initial dinner at the by-then quite venerable Misseri's Hotel.

"At first I thought the Constantinople fare the most delightful I had ever encountered anywhere. At the first dinner at which I sat down we were served amongst other things with red mullet, stuffed tomatoes and quail – all excellent of their sort and admirably prepared." But when he was served red mullet again, for breakfast, lunch, and dinner the following day, his enthusiasm palled. At Valori's restaurant he refused it. Instead, he wrote, "We ate tough beefsteak, fried in oil, and cursed the



FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

Opposite, top Abdülhamid II's court painter Fausto Zonaro depicts Miss Singleton, stepdaughter of the British ambassador Sir Philip Currie, in the garden of the embassy on her way to her wedding in 1896. Currie asked Zonaro to include the view over the Golden Horn. The sultan's wedding gift was a diamond bracelet
Far left Poster for the French line Messageries Maritimes, which sailed between Marseille and Constantinople
Above The Pera Palace, built for Orient Express passengers, opened in 1892

delicacies of the country." However, like most travellers, Murray was beguiled by the cultural diversity he saw around him at the restaurant. "The diners at Valori's made up the first really polyglot assembly I had ever seen. There were Bulgarian notables – caring apparently to speak their own language only – Spanish Jews from Eski Zaghra, Greeks, Turks, Germans, Italians, Armenians, Englishmen, native volunteers for the Polish legion then forming, and a Croat gentleman with bejewelled handles to his private arsenal of lethal weapons, and starched expansive white petticoats."

Murray had left for Turkey "very much under the domination of Mr Gladstone", but the people he found there changed his views. "The real people, the men of the commercial and artisan classes and the rank and file of the army, are amongst the best people I have ever known. Their religion enjoins them to sobriety, and as a race they are brave, truthful and kindly," he wrote in his memoirs years later.

Travellers were always advised to stock up on essentials, which perhaps meant buying provisions when their ship stopped off at Malta. An English saddle, a double silk umbrella (to protect against sun as well as rain), a straw hat, a green veil or blue spectacles against solar glare, were just some of the items on the English visitor's lengthy shopping list. But there were things that could be obtained in Istanbul too, such as port from the Galata grocer Stampa, which might protect them from malaria.

If you wanted to hire a local valet, that could be arranged from the 1840s – they were available for a few francs a day. If you required a guide – a *cicerone,* as they were known – Mustafa, a former janissary who had begun life as a Swiss but survived the 1826 slaughter by Mahmud II in the service of the kindly John Cartwright (British consul-general from 1816 to 1843), was available at "a modest price".

Of course, the aim of visitors then, as now, was sightseeing, and some were more adventurous than others. In 1833 Friedrich Tietz, seeing no guard standing outside Topkapı Palace, sneaked into the first courtyard for a good look round – later claiming to be the first Westerner to do so, though this is doubtful. He met a few Turks along the way who were inquisitive but did not stop him. On leaving he was saddened to be told he had missed the mortar in which the sultan executed *şeyhülislams* (chief clerics) who fell from favour by grinding them up. Evidently, pulling the foreign tourist's leg is nothing new.

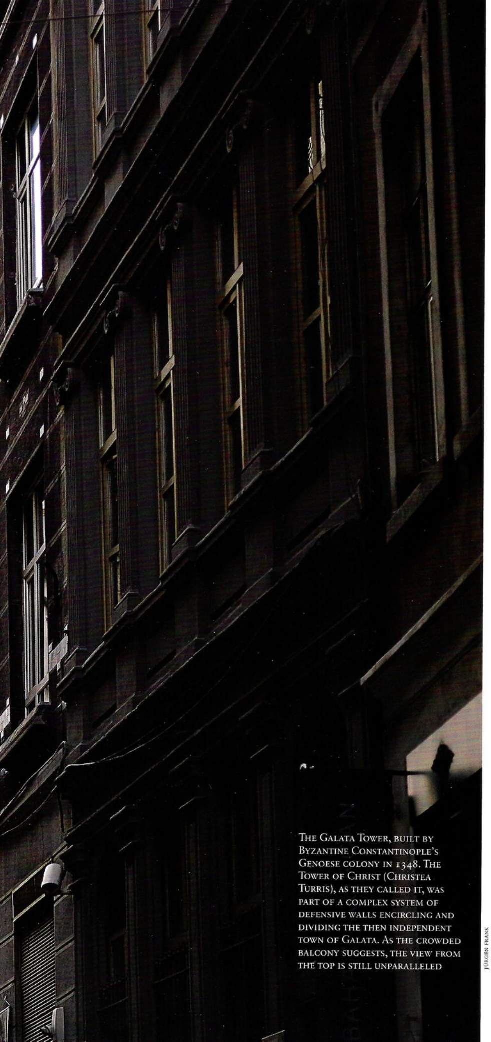
Early-19th-century visitors would stay for a few weeks, even months, whereas diplomats and merchants of course lived in the city for years. But every visit had to come to an end, and most 19th-century travellers departed, as they had arrived, by sea. Lady Layard and her husband, the British ambassador, left by yacht on June 2, 1880. The Layards had been probably the most pro-Turkish British ambassadorial couple of the 19th century, but their mission had been ruined by Gladstone and Abdülhamid II, having fallen foul of both men, and they were leaving the city they loved. Enid wrote in her diary: "We set off at 6 o'clock on a lovely evening with hardly a breath of wind and we sat on deck and saw the fairy-like city fade away gradually into the evening mists." They never saw Istanbul again. ◆

David Barchard's book 'Ottoman Lives' is due to be published in spring 2015

YILDIZ EMLAK
GAYRIMENKUL
DANIŞMANLIK
TEL 292 29 23
kültür & sanat

THE TOWER AND THE GLORY

FOR 700 YEARS, THE EUROPEAN QUARTER WAS HOME TO GENOESE, JEWS, GREEKS AND MANY OTHERS. NORMAN STONE CHARTS THE DISTRICT'S CHANGING FORTUNES



The 14th-century Galata Tower is one of Istanbul's most obvious landmarks, and it symbolises the strong European influence in the city. The quarter around it, on the northern side of the Golden Horn, had been a Genoese colony, but it expanded to take in many of the Jews and most of the Christians. The foreign embassies were there, along with churches and schools, and as 19th-century reforms went ahead, Galata acquired banks, hotels, insurance offices of a type that you can see anywhere between Glasgow's St Vincent Street and Budapest.

In the 1880s Galata and its neighbour up the hill, Pera, were huge building sites, with Art Nouveau all around, together with smart cafés and fashionable French shops where you heard innumerable languages. Some of the buildings are very good indeed. The best address in Istanbul is probably the Doğan Apartments, just down a hill from the Swedish embassy, up a hill from the Anglican church, and opposite the Deutsche Schule (1868). It

BRIAN MCKEE

JÜRGEN FRANK

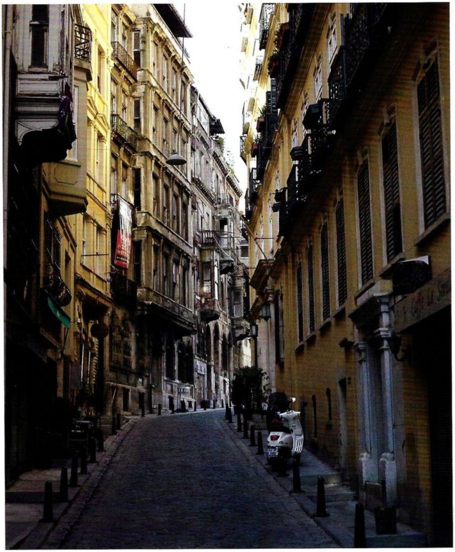
THE GALATA TOWER, BUILT BY BYZANTINE CONSTANTINOPLE'S GENOESE COLONY IN 1348. THE TOWER OF CHRIST (CHRISTEA TURRIS), AS THEY CALLED IT, WAS PART OF A COMPLEX SYSTEM OF DEFENSIVE WALLS ENCIRCLING AND DIVIDING THE THEN INDEPENDENT TOWN OF GALATA. AS THE CROWDED BALCONY SUGGESTS, THE VIEW FROM THE TOP IS STILL UNPARALLELED stands on land given up by the Prussian Legation and is a tall, Italian-designed, U-shaped building, looking out over the Bosphorus. The street in which it stands, Serdar-ı Ekrem, has another comparable building, once the palace of a Jewish banking family, the Camondos, which has been converted into a grand short-stay apartment-hotel. Much of Galata now looks as it used to. But it was not ever thus. Twenty years ago the place was a ruin: from the roof of the Camondo Palace, shrubs and trees were growing, and Pera was only really saved because the old foreign embassies, with their gardens, were inviolate.

The decline dated from September 6, 1955, the stupidest day in the history of the Turkish Republic. Around 5pm crowds of enraged nationalists gathered at Taksim and moved down the main street, smashing shop windows, looting goods and roughing up innocents. Their target was the Greek minority of Istanbul and the pretext was retaliation for Greek Cypriot atrocities, which were real enough.

But sinister forces were behind the Galata pogrom. The 150,000 Greeks of Istanbul had property (they accounted for half the stock exchange) and they fled over the next few years. They had been Turkey's most obvious agents in dealing with Western Europe, and they were almost entirely loyal, with parliamentary deputies in the government party. When, to punish the malefactors, a subsequent military regime put that party's leaders on trial, the Orthodox Patriarch spoke in their defence. These Istanbul Greeks, with a presence going back thousands of years, had nothing in common with their pain-in-the-neck Cypriot cousins. And Istanbul paid a terrible price.

The Greek buildings were abandoned, to rot for the next 40 years. They were taken over by squatters, and the quarter became notoriously dangerous. It began to recover only in 1990, when a formidable lady, Ceylan Orhun, a trained architect, spotted the potential of a splendid Italian-built block on the Tower square, and established a bridgehead. On a side wall below the building there was a sign that said it all: "*Buraya çöp atan orosbu çocuğur*" (sic) ("Anyone who dumps rubbish here is a son of a whore"), with "*eşektir*" ("...is a donkey") crossed out. As in Hogarthian London, people just chucked the rubbish out of the window. But now the squatters are gone, and the reconstruction is spectacular.

Galata was always a place where foreign elements settled, on the other side (the meaning of Pera) of the Golden Horn. The name Galata is very old, and its origins are not clear, though common sense suggests that it has something to do with Galatia, where, in the centre of Anatolia, Celtic mercenary tribes set up a kingdom, the subjects of which were addressed by St Paul.


JÜRGEN FRANK

In late Byzantine times the place was settled by Genoese fighting with the Venetians for mastery of the Black Sea, and they speedily made a deal with the Turks, ferrying them over to Europe a hundred years before Constantinople fell to them. When the Ottomans were being creative, they knew how to deal with foreigners, and the inhabitants of Galata were free from religious harassment. An old (still recognisably) Dominican church became today's Arab Mosque, but other churches functioned perfectly well, the oldest being the Franciscan Pietro Paolo (Sts Peter and Paul), which lies just down a road from the Tower, and goes back to the early 17th century (though much rebuilt).

The Italians were preponderant until 1600, after which the Dutch, English and French pushed in, together with embassies, and this also became a Jewish area, with two famous synagogues. Today the port quarter is called Karaköy, but that is a corruption of Karaim, a Crimean Jewish sect. As Galata grew in population, the buildings crept up the then vine-covered hills to the northwest, and the newly acquired settlement was called Pera – today's Beyoğlu, which means "son of the governor (or lord)", in this case a long-serving 16th-century Italian who converted.

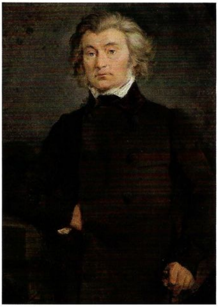
In general, the Christians were useful to the Ottomans, and were left to get on with their lives, drink included, even when puritanical sultans such as Murad IV or Osman III were on the warpath. There was insecurity, of course, but it came from causes such as the plague, and more particularly from the great fires that swept away whole quarters of wooden houses. The Galata Tower itself has been frequently restored, partly because of earthquakes, although Galata and Beyoğlu have the advantage of sitting on rock, rather than

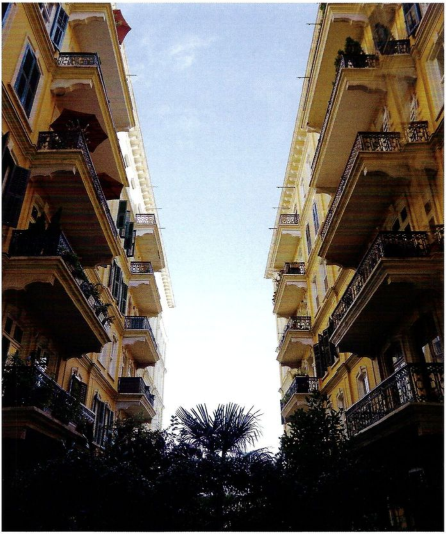
Opposite The newly smartened Serdar-i Ekrem Caddesi runs from the Galata Tower past the Doğan Apartments (on the right), built in the 1890s by a family of wealthy Belgian bankers for staff in Galata's many foreign companies
Below The courtyard of the Doğan Apartments – this spot, with its unrivalled view of the Topkapi, was previously chosen for Bismarck's Prussian Embassy
Right Adam Mickiewicz, painted by Aleksander Kaminski in 1850 (from the Sakip Sabanci Museum's Polish exhibition). The luckless Romantic poet came to Istanbul to raise Polish and Jewish arms against Russia in the Crimean War, but died of cholera in 1855. His modest house in Beyoğlu, on Sakizağaci Caddesi, off Tarlabaşi, remains a place of pilgrimage

the sandy soil that makes the rest of Istanbul so vulnerable.

Galata's great period began with the conscious Westernising of the Ottoman Empire in the middle of the 19th century. In 1838 a free-trade treaty was signed with the British at Baltalimanı, and in 1839 the famous Gülhane (Rose Garden) declaration of "beneficent changes" (*tanzimat*) gave equality of status to all the sultan's subjects. The Christians were much better prepared for this than the Muslims (and, for some time, the Jews) because they already had schools and printing presses, whereas Muslims were still caught up with a script that took years to learn and publishers who trotted out lives of saints.

As trade boomed, so too did solid, stone-built Victorian building, as happened anywhere in the European world. Ships unloaded for Pera at the dockyard in Karaköy, where many of the dockers were Hellenised Italians (Garibaldi came there to make trouble, and the chief of the civil-war Greek Communists, Nikos Zachariadis, cut his teeth there), and the goods were humped up to Pera along an enormously long street consisting of steps – today's Yüksek Kaldırım, once called Skalakia. Karaköy Square acquired a Wiener Bank (now Ziraat), a Banque d'Athènes (now part of Sabancı University) and a Nordstern Insurance building, now under restoration. The great avenue up to Taksim, then called the Grand' Rue de Péra, was studded with fin-de-siècle buildings, and shopping hans, some of them very grand. The Ottoman elite made its presence felt with the Galatasaray Lycée, and mingled with Levantines and ambassadors in the masonic Cercle d'Orient.


NATIONAL MUSEUM, WARSAW

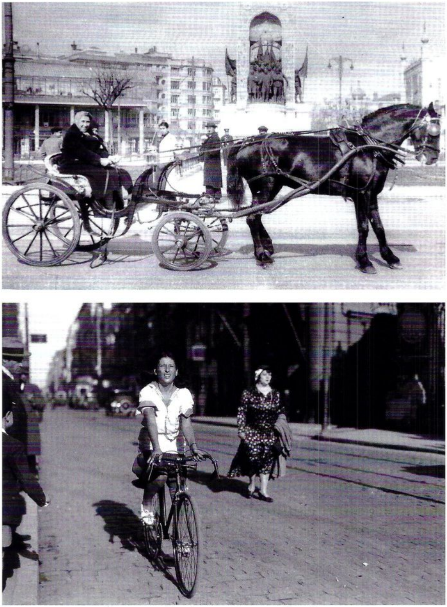

JÜRGEN FRANK

The poet Czesław Miłosz said of "the Europe of midinettes and shop-keepers" that it brewed up its own destruction: the First World War and the horrors that followed. So it may have been with the denizens of Galata. The triumphant Westerners and their local associates looked to take over from the Turks; when the British occupied Istanbul in 1920 there was a great portrait of the Greek leader, Venizelos, in the middle of Taksim Square, where the Monument to the Republic now stands. The Greek minority survived, and Galata acquired a decent building or two, but the place was in decline even before 1955. Now that the Turks have rediscovered its virtues we shall see what happens next. But can we begin by removing the worst modern eyesore, the two-storey concrete supermarket-cum-tat-shops that wreck the Italian piazza at the foot of the Galata Tower? ◆

Norman Stone is the author of 'Turkey: A Short History' (Thames & Hudson), available from cornucopia.net at £9.95

SPIRITS OF BEYOĞLU

MAUREEN FREELY RECALLS THE ARTISTS AND WRITERS WHO ENLIVENED HER CHILDHOOD WITH THEIR FLAMBOYANT BRAVADO AND UNSPOKEN SADNESS



PHOTOGRAPHS: YAPI KREDI SELAHATTIN GIZ COLLECTION

THE PHOTOGRAPHER SELAHATTIN GIZ (1914–94) CAUGHT BEYOĞLU LIFE IN ALL ITS GUISES AND ALL

When I think back on the Beyoğlu I came to know as a child in the 1960s, what I see most clearly are the cafés where our mother took us for profiteroles and Viennese coffee, the bars and restaurants where we met our father afterwards, the meyhanes where the waiters looked after us so well, even when it was way past our bedtime, and the parties at which the great artist Aliye Berger would pinpoint the greater gifts that only she could see in us.

But what I feel most keenly are the sorrows that were left outside the door. I couldn't have given a name to them then. And neither could I have identified the writers and artists and actors and directors whose smiles never betrayed the sadness I could see in their eyes as they walked in with arms outstretched. In those days, I saw mystery in their flamboyance. I conjured up extravagant tragedies.

Now I understand that for most of them the hardest thing was getting through the day. It was next to impossible to make a living in the arts in mid-20th-century Istanbul. It was difficult to travel or to stay in touch with the outside world. For those who combined literature with politics, it was far too easy to end up in prison.

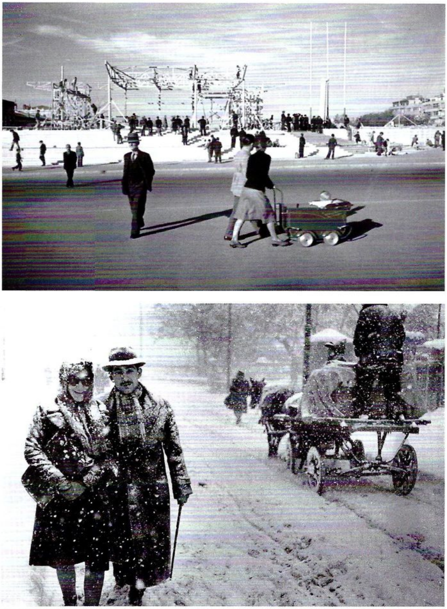
But there was also Beyoğlu, to take your mind away from all that, if only for a few hours. In its cafés and meyhanes, writers and artists did not have to speak to be understood. "The waiters could tell from our eyes if we had no money," Ülkü Tamer recalled. "They would plunk a bottle of soda water in front of us, and that would take us through to the evening."

He was speaking about Baylan, the sumptuous establishment that was founded in the same year as the Republic and went on to lend its name to a literary movement, but I remember seeing the same silent arrangements beneath the chandeliers and Art Nouveau wall panels of Markiz. It would not, I imagine, have been much different in Nisuaz, the favoured late-afternoon gathering place for writers such as Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar and Sabahattin Ali before and during the Second World War. Many literary journals were conceived here, and many literary matters arbitrated – or at least caricatured. "Here it's the same old story," Sait Faik wrote to Orhan Veli in 1941. "Every Saturday, literary Istanbul meets at Nisuaz to pass its judgements."

After dark, they would move on to Lambo, in Nevizade Sokağı, which Orhan Veli counted as his discovery and İlhan Berk described as being "as small as a tram". Women writers seem to have felt particularly at home here. In later years, Leyla Erbil, Leyla Umar and Mina Urgan were all regulars. Monsieur Lambo was a communist. He would sit behind the counter reading Russian classics. When regulars were unable to meet their bills, he would sometimes ask them to pay with a poem or a few wise words.

Also in Nevizade was Lefter's Meyhane, much loved by Orhan Kemal, Ülkü Tamer, Ece Ayhan and countless others. Night after night, the laterna in the back played one song only ('A love will come to us from the islands'), but because the rakı flowed just as freely, no one ever found reason to complain.

In the early years of the Republic, the Çiçek Pasaji was best known as the home of Yahya Kemal's favourite restaurant, the elegant Degustasyon. The Cumhuriyet



WEATHERS. PIYANGOCU NIMET ABLA (TOP LEFT) MADE A MINT FROM SELLING LOTTERY TICKETS

Meyhanesi, located just around the corner, kept a special table for Atatürk. A few streets away there was Rejans, whose owners were said to have danced for the Bolshoi before the revolution. In its early years, their restaurant was a gathering place for Russia's fleeing aristocracy. By the time I arrived, all the establishments in this neighbourhood were dusty and disintegrating but, now more than ever, the Çiçek Pasajı had become a place where anyone (any man, that is) could go with their friends to spend an evening drinking *arjantins* of beer with plate after plate of fried mussels, saying whatever they couldn't say at home.

Late at night, rebellion seemed almost possible. In the Neşe Meyhanesi, in the nearby Krepen Pasajı, the dream began at midday. There was, my father tells me, a group of writers that met before lunch every Friday to synchronise their first rakı with the midday call to prayer.

When that meyhane closed its doors in the mid-Sixties, the group moved on to Seviç, in the Çiçek Pasajı. This was not the last time it had to move camp but somehow it kept going. Aydın Boysan, one of the group's founding members, now in his mid-nineties, is alleged not to have missed a single meeting.

Kulis, with its velvet curtains and its walls of mirrors, was more refined, in a European sort of way. It was a place where a woman felt protected. In the loo was a table at which ladies could sit and smoke and take a break from the mirrors, if they so wished. Artfully arranged behind the ashtray was a giant Spanish dancer doll, a selection of make-up, and a bottle of Johnny Walker Black.

Like Papirüs across the street and the Art Deco bar at the Park Hotel, Kulis was mostly a journalists' haunt, through which writers, artists, diplomats, spies and defectors from the bourgeoisie also wandered. Many were theatrical enough to outdo the actors and directors from the nearby Yeşilçam studios. There was a great deal of posturing and tragic laughter. There were passionate soliloquies, and long, meandering anecdotes that ended with a slap on the table, and wars of words that would have ended in death if anyone had been able to remember them. But there was, nonetheless, a sense of common cause – an agreement, at least, that those living on the margin could not do without their friends. Sütçüyan, the owner of Kulis, loved his regulars like children. If they hadn't turned up for a few days, he would go and see them, just to make sure they weren't ill.

But by the end of the 1970s life had become as difficult for the owners of Beyoğlu's cafés and meyhanes as it was for its bohemians. Many of these owners were Greek and Armenian, and the middle years of the 20th century were not kind to them.

The exodus began with the riots of 1955, and continued with the Cyprus crisis of 1964. As the Greeks and Armenians left, the city's new immigrants moved in to take their place. The streets became more dangerous. Establishment after establishment burned down. The film industry died, taking the Yeşilçam studios with it. When Monsieur Lambo was forced to close his meyhane, he turned it into a shoe shop. Not long afterwards, he committed suicide. And it seemed as if the old Beyoğlu was gone for ever.

But over the past two decades, it has been slowly, very slowly, coming back into its own. It is a little shinier these days – and a little too conscious of its past. But never mind. It is heartening to see Ara Güler's photographs of mid-20th-century Beyoğlu on the walls of the Café Ara in Galatasaray. And when I go to Cihangir or Asmalımescit, I can still find cafés and meyhanes that serve as second homes for the artists and writers of the neighbourhood. I can see them leaving their sorrows at the door, and walking in with outstretched arms, and settling into a chair to be cared for by silently compassionate waiters, and making do with soda water while they draw, and write, and dream of wilder nights. The spirit of old Beyoğlu is still with us. ◆

Maureen Freely is a novelist and translator and Professor of English and Comparative Literary Studies at Warwick University

Take to the streets

BEYOĞLU BOOGIE

ISTANBUL'S ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT IS THE PLACE TO COME FOR HIP SOUNDS, AN UNLIKELY ASSORTMENT OF SHOPS, AND A MIND-BOGGLING CHOICE OF RESTAURANTS

Many come to Istanbul to see the Blue Mosque and Ayasofya and leave the next day. More hedonistic types arrive in Beyoğlu, the entertainment district, and never make it home to bed. It is an area defined by modern Taksim Square to the north and the Galata Tower to the south.

The main street is **İstiklâl Caddesi** (Independence Avenue, once the Grand' Rue de Péra), a crowded pedestrian thoroughfare, with the elite **Galatasaray Lycée** halfway down. Even in Byzantine times the district had a different beat from the city on the other side of the Golden Horn. Reminders of the quarter's European past are seen in 19th-century shopping arcades and grand hotels such as the Tokatlian, now a warren of grubby workshops, the **Pera Palace**, the **Büyük Londra** (the old Grand Hotel de Londres) and those great embassies of the other imperial powers – Sweden, Holland, Russia, France, Britain.

Taksim Square is a poor man's Place de l'Étoile, with spokes leading to the Bosphorus and the post-war business districts strung along its hills, Levent and Maslak to the north. It takes its name from the 18th-century distribution point for water piped all the way in from the Belgrade Forest. There are the remains of a giant cistern on the western side, now overshadowed by the Marmara Hotel. At the end of the square is the Atatürk Cultural Centre, an austerely modernist concert hall, which the city authorities want to tear down.

TAKSİM – TÜNEL

Taksim also contains the important but modest **Monument to the Republic**, designed by Pietro Canonica in 1928, which has made it the focus of political rallies and demonstrations. The fate of the adjacent **Gezi Park** sparked clashes between protesters and police in the summer of 2013, when the government tried to push through a plan to turn the park into a shopping mall based on the design of an unamusingly eclectic late-19th-century barracks that once stood there. The barracks were damaged by insurrection in 1909 and in 1921 were turned into a football stadium, itself later demolished, to leave today's park.

A nascent environmental movement wanted to save the trees and experienced a rite of passage, in the course of which Beyoğlu confirmed its place as the centre for new Turkish art. There are many galleries, but also public exhibition spaces such as the **Pera Museum**, **ARTER** and **SALT Beyoğlu**, all funded by private companies.

It is after dark that the district really comes into its own as a playground. The streets off the **Balık Pazarı** (Fish Market) and the **Çiçek Pasajı** (Flower Arcade – though they serve beer and meze, not blooms) are crowded with diners. Clubs play Turkish folk and indie rock. There are Thai and Italian restaurants, the odd hamburger joint and those specialising in meze nouveau. Every fresh trend sweeps through, be it tequila shots, tattoo parlours or fortune tellers reading coffee dregs.

Beyoğlu is not large enough to contain all these new trends, and the small fashion houses and boutique hotels spill down the hill to neighbourhoods such as **Çukurcuma**, already famous for its mix of bric-a-brac and high-end antique shops. To the northwest of İstiklâl is Tarlabaşı Boulevard – once a mixed neighbourhood of Roma and new migrants, now the victim of a ruthless programme of urban regeneration.

Andrew Finkel

The Grand' Rue: all dash and cash

İstiklâl Caddesi – formerly the Grand' Rue de Péra – changes by the hour. The street draws an endless stream of promenaders. It used to be the hunting ground of young men hungry for a taste of Beyoğlu's looser life, but last year's Gezi protests were a watershed. Beyoğlu now belongs to a more inclusive, self-confident class, students at the fore.

As afternoon moves into evening, crowds surge past the music shops, with tourists queuing for the dervish shows at the reopened **Mevlevihane Museum**. Throngs gather round anything that catches the eye: buskers playing Balkan gypsy music or Bach suites, living statues, women holding photographs of the long-disappeared, or Syrians protesting outside the Russian Consulate. Boys on inline skates zip past a water-cannon truck and a phalanx of riot police at Galatasaray; a cruise-ship group follow their flag, in a little brush with excitement. A woman in a T-shirt that reads "Mistanbul" sings rhythmic Turkish folk songs with a microphone and a hand drum; young men join a gentle dance.

In at the deep end: Tünel Square

The tram terminates in **Tünel Square** at the Galata Tower end of İstiklâl. This is the easiest place to arrive in Beyoğlu because of the transport links. You can get here by the original **Tünel**, the one-stop underground line, which climbs from the square in Karaköy close to the Galata Bridge; or take the metro to **Şişhane**, where escalators bring you all the way up to İstiklâl.

It is also the best way into Beyoğlu because you are in the thick of things without having to deal with the hassle of Taksim.

JÜRGEN FRANK

The elegance of The House Café in the Misir Apartments (İstiklâl Cad 163) is a reminder that İstiklâl was once the Grand' Rue de Péra. Upstairs are excellent art galleries **Opposite** The Taksim–Tünel tram clangs its way up and down İstiklâl Caddesi, to the joy of residents

You can choose between the buzzy quarter above the Galata Tower, the bars and meyhanes of Asmalımescit, Istanbul's Little Vienna, and the pretty lanes that thread past grand embassies down to the Bosphorus.

İstiklâl Caddesi is at its most civilised between Tünel and Galatasaray. You'll find four well-stocked English-language bookshops: **Eren** (Sofyalı Sok 24, off Tünel Square), **Robinson Crusoe** (upstairs at SALT Beyoğlu, İstiklâl Cad 136), **Denizler** (No 199) and **Homer** (Yeni Çarşı Cad 12), close to the old Magnum photographer Ara Güler's **Ara Café** off Galatasaray Square. And there are spacious spots in which to linger – the stylish **House Café** (İstiklâl Cad 163), the new rooftop **Divan Brasserie** (No 181) and the famous Art Nouveau **Markiz** (No 172 – ignore the digital food displays in the window). The street also has three heavyweight art spaces: **SALT Beyoğlu** (No 136) and **ARTER** (No 211) for contemporary art, the **Koç Research Institute** (No 181) for historical shows.

Perhaps the most striking single building in Beyoğlu is here, at No 235. The seven-storey **Casa Botter** (1900–01) is an Art Nouveau extravaganza built as a home and workshop for Jean Botter, a Dutch couturier to the sultans. It is on the point of collapse and covered with scaffolding, but even a glimpse of the door surrounds shows what a treasure this was.

Opposite is the **Narmanlı Han**, with its Grecian-temple façade, home to early-19th-century Russian envoys and, after the Second World War, to a host of writers and artists. A plan to build a bank tower in the courtyard has apparently been abandoned for now.

Galatasaray: from pickles to corsets

Halfway down İstiklâl, the heavy gates of the **Galatasaray Lycée**, the school that spawned a football club, are a landmark where demonstrators often congregate. Directly across the road is the entrance to the **Balık Pazarı** (the old Fish Market), and the watering holes of Çiçek Pasajı and Nevizade Sokağı. Drop in to **İmroz** (Nevizade Sok 24), the oldest and most famous meyhane (tavern), for rakı and classic meze such as marrow fritters and white cheese (*beyaz peynir*) and melon. For rakı with spicy dips (*ezme*) and grilled meat and vegetables, go to **Pala**, a pristine *oçakbaşı* with courteous owners, upstairs at Kalyoncu Kulluğu Caddesi 17.

BRIAN MCKEE

Birahane offering beer and chips continue all the way to Taksim, and between them are good, inexpensive places for a quick alcohol-free lunch. Try the Black Sea restaurant **Hayvore** (Turnacıbaşı Sok 4) for fried anchovies, stuffed chard and cornbread. The classic lokanta **Lades** (Sadri Alışık Sok 14), with a rotating daily menu, has assumed the mantle of the late Haci Salih, serving Turkish home cooking at its best.

The **Tarihi Kalkanoğlu Pilavcısı** (Ayhan Işık Sok 16) is a small place with a long name and a short menu: *kavurma* (braised lamb), rice and beans – order a plate of all three.

JÜRGEN FRANK

For the best Turkish coffee, backtrack past Galatasaray to a row of stools called **Mandabatmaz**, a café on the alleyway Olivia Geçidi – where the sign for the famous Russian restaurant Rejans is still visible.

In Balık Pazarı, you can stock up on all manner of old-fashioned delicacies. At the pickle shop **Petek Turşuları** (Duduodaları Sok 1), start with a traditional glass of pickle water before sampling the fare. "We can make every food and vegetable in pickle," says Özgür Arı. The fruits and vegetables are preserved only in salt, with a little sugar and vinegar – no chemicals. Sealed in vacuum jars, they will last unopened for two years. The colours are vibrant; the flavours land on the palate a second later than you'd expect. In summer they feature baby melon, beans, *acur* ("cousin of cucumber"), plump cloves of garlic, green tomatoes and beetroot.

Üç Yıldız Şekerleme, next door at No 7, founded in 1926, sells jams from Ali Baba-like giant steel jars, including *ayva* (quince), *gül* (rose) and *vişne* (sour cherry). As Beyoğlu became a red-light district in the 1970s, customers were afraid to come, says the owner. Popular favourites include *lohut*, soft white fondant sweets flavoured with mastic and bergamot. **Hacı Bekir**, at İstiklâl Caddesi 83, stocks little jars as well, and both shops sell *akide* (drops of boiled sugar), boiled sweets in lemon, mint or cherry flavours, fresh soft marzipan, and of course *lokum*, Turkish delight.

The butchers opposite Üç Yıldız on Duduodaları supply partridge, duck and woodcock. The fishmonger belongs to the fish restaurant **İmroz**. They sell sun-dried *çiroz*, thin mackerel sun-dried on a string, which are beaten with a pestle, then soaked in hot water and vinegar, strained and served with dill – a meze staple eaten with rakı. There are slabs of *bottarga*, grey mullet roe the size of your hand, sealed in beeswax.

Excellent nut and dried-fruit shops include **Hocaoğlu Kuruyemiş** on Balo Sokağı, for *leblebi* (roasted chickpeas) and *fıstık* (pistachios).

At İstiklâl Caddesi 116, duck into **Hacopulo Pasajı**, a shady, cobbled courtyard reached through a narrow passage, and you enter a different world. A traditional *kahve* (café) with pavement stools is filled to overflowing by mid-afternoon. Tea trays circulate at speed up and down the steps to the **Panaiya Isodion Church**, where the air is hazy with tobacco smoke. There are costume shops and junk shops, though beware the vintage-car models.

Many of the old tradesmen have left Hacopulo, so it is good to find **Madame Katia's** magnificent hats still there, and, outside on the main drag, at İstiklâl Caddesi 128, the old Bursa family firm of **Hacı Resul** selling *fantazi kumaş* (luxury fabrics for clothes). Across the road at No 391 are the old silversmiths and jewellers **Diamantştayn** – shy and equally timeless – and **Kelebek Korse**, the Butterfly Corset shop (No 215). Any shop with an old glass name sign hanging in the window is worth a visit.

BRIAN MCKEE

Tepebaşı: a magnet for travellers

Running beside the Golden Horn side of İstiklâl, the slightly forlorn 19th-century Meşrutiyet Caddesi goes all the way from Galatasaray to the Şişhane metro. It passes through **Tepebaşı**, the old Petits Champs des Morts cemetery – now a morbid underground car park, whose roof still has the best views of Golden Horn sunsets.

JÜRGEN FRANK

OPPOSITE TOP ÇIÇEK PASAJI, A LEGENDARY GALATASARAY ARCADE, NOW LESS FUN THAN IN THE 1960S
LEFT A BREAD DELIVERY
THIS PAGE, TOP THE WALL PANELS AT MARKIZ, THE FORMER LEBON, WHOSE CAKES WERE SENT TO EUROPE ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS. TODAY IT IS A FAST-FOOD JOINT
ABOVE CASA BOTTER, RAIMONDO D'ARONCO'S MASTERPIECE, IN BETTER DAYS. NOW BOARDED UP, ITS FUTURE IS IN DOUBT
RIGHT A WISE MAN TAKES HIS EASE

Hacopulo Pasajı makes a romantic short cut to it from İstiklâl. Shorter and less diverting is an alleyway under Odakule, an eye-catching tower block halfway between Galatasaray and Tünel, which comes out by the superb **Pera Museum** (Meşrutiyet Cad 65), with its Orientalist paintings, Kütahya ceramics and ambitious exhibitions. The museum also has a large, calm, air-conditioned café with Maria Callas's grand piano in the centre. Beyoğlu could have been the new Bilbao at no expense to the taxpayer, since the museum's owners, the Suna and İnan Kıraç Foundation, commissioned Frank Gehry to design an arts centre where TRT, the state TV and radio service, squats in a parody of a Bavarian barn. The government said no.

Other cultural landmarks include **Pera House** (the British Consulate), which looks like a Pall Mall club and holds interesting talks and gatherings. The **Istanbul Research Institute** (No 47) holds in-depth historical photographic shows. The **Büyük Londra** (Grand Hotel de Londres, No 53), an old institution recently dusted down and gilded, is still full of louche writers and travellers.

On your right after the car park is what Graham Greene described in *Stamboul Train* as "the great, garish **Pera Palace** Hotel with its tiled floors and international staff". Greene never visited, though Agatha Christie did.

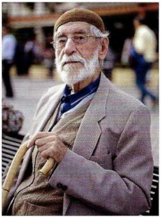
The **Adahan Hotel**, nearer Şişhane (entrance at General Yazgan Sok 14), is an austerely beautiful restoration of apartments with huge rooms and high ceilings that shows the potential of the fine old buildings in this neighbourhood.

Meşrutiyet Caddesi is a honey pot for innovative restaurateurs, and Londoners will think they have stumbled across a small branch of Ottolenghi when they find **Gram** (No 107), with its theatrical meringues and perfect cakes and coffee. It is owned by Didem Şenol, the female chef who also owns the more formal **Lokanta Maya** in Karaköy. The warm lighting and tiny open kitchen (with the only Aga in Istanbul?) make it an ideal spot for a bowl of soup in winter, although you'd be foolish to leave without tasting the ice cream (especially the astonishing chocolate bergamot flavour). Hot and cold food is also available to take away.

Asmalımescit: bars and meyhanes

Step behind the tall **Marmara Pera Hotel**, with its top-floor restaurant **Mikla**, and you are in the district of Asmalımescit, home to the music club **Babylon** (Şehbender Sok 3), and to the veteran meyhanes **Refik** (Sofyalı Sok 6), **Sofyalı 9** (No 9), **Yakup 2** (Asmalımescit Cad 35) and **Asmalı Cavit** (No 16).

This was Little Vienna, where Pera's 19th-century building boom began. Named after a long-vanished "mosque with a vine", it extends from Tepebaşı to Tünel. The busiest street, Sofyalı Sokağı (parallel to İstiklâl), ends in the prosperous **Tünel Gecidi** arcade. There you will find galleries – **Galatea** (Sofyalı Sok 12) is unafraid to show resistance art – the academic bookshop Eren (No 24) and antique shops such as **Artrium** (Tünel Geçidi 7). It is also chock-a-block with meyhanes, which, with the ban on indoor smoking, always spill out into the streets. Tables come and go, literally. One famous night the prime minister asked


JÜRGEN FRANK

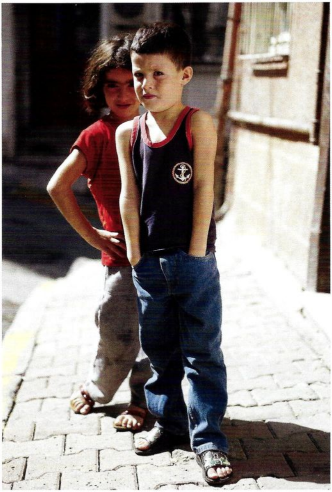
why they were there; the next evening officers charged through the street whipping the tables away from under the knives and forks of open-mouthed tourists.

Şimdi Café, entered through heavy curtains in the hall of the Atlas Apartments near Tünel (Asmalımescit Cad 5), is a good place for a no-fuss lunch, late coffee and dessert, or cocktails in a low-key interior. Look for the hanging clock outside. At the end of a slightly intimidating row of meyhanes and noisy bars, **Helvetia** (General Yazgan Sok 8) is unmarked and has no menu, but serves delicious home-style food in a canteen atmosphere. Expect communal tables, low prices and good vegetarian dishes – bulghur pilav, stuffed courgettes, yoghurt with everything – but meat is served too.

Downtown dervishes

Little of the classical Ottoman world survives in Beyoğlu. But the 1740s **Galatasaray Hamam**, next to the old palace school, is still flourishing, and at the Tünel end of İstiklâl, Galip Dede Caddesi has its dervish lodge, the **Galata Mevlevihane**. Thanks to the Mevlevi love of music, the street is the place to buy cymbals, ouds, drums, bass guitars (for pianos go to Beşiktaş). Down the road is **Nardis**, the jazz club run by the guitarist Önder Focan and his wife Zühal (Kuledibi Sok 14, live music from 9.30 weekdays, 11.30 Fri–Sat; tickets TL35–40; +90 212 244 6327).

In recent years, dervishes, like pomegranates, have become as much a part of the souvenir scene as *boncuks* (beads) and cardboard fezzes. Nowadays you cannot move in Istanbul for aluminium dervishes that twirl above small candles. And like hamam-going and, increasingly, belly-dancing, a whirling-dervish performance seems to be a fixture on many visitors' itineraries without being very representative of modern Turkish life. It comes as a relief, therefore, to discover that the Mevlevi lodge itself has been simply restored, with an emphasis on the dervish order's roots rather than the sale of felt dolls of dancing men. In fact, there is no gift shop at all. Once you have entered the courtyard – a very large open space for this quarter – and recovered from the ugliness of the ticket booth and the huge CCTV cameras, you can enjoy the shade and respite from İstiklâl Caddesi that your TL10 ticket buys you.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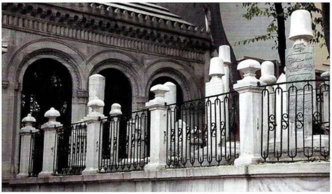
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TOP AND ABOVE RIGHT Life in the back streets of Beyoğlu
ABOVE Graves in the garden of the Galata Mevlevihane, the dervish lodge at the Tünel end of İstiklâl Caddesi

Straight ahead is the graceful octagonal *semahane*, where the dervish ceremonies take place at 5pm on Sundays for an additional fee. Tickets must be bought in advance. The small museum contains well-presented turbans and dervish-related objects, and has a room showing a film of a ceremony, if you wish to avoid the tiresome Sunday-night crowd. Do not leave without exploring the shady cemetery, with its elegant turbaned graves, among them that of the Sufi poet Galip Dede, who gives the street its name.

Farther down on your left, turn into Serdar-ı Ekrem Caddesi, for a series of discreet surprises. It is easy to miss the **Georges Hotel** (No 24), with its smart rooftop French restaurant and wonderful views, the perfect place for an evening drink. Close by on the right, it is worth peeking into the **Doğan Apartments**, the most handsome block in Istanbul, and, after a sharp turn down to the right, the Anglican Crimean Church.

JÜRGEN FRANK

Serdar-ı Ekrem Caddesi is a pretty, often strikingly expensive street. There are cafés with club sandwiches and bad abstract art; girls trying on handmade sandals as Audis and BMWs push around a corner. There are shops such as **Lomography** (No 5), which sells film cameras that promise to "leave the digital grind behind", and a branch of **Urban Station** (No 15), a global network of stylish drop-in workplaces. For a taste of proper Istanbul, visit tiny **Minimini** on the corner of Şah Kullu Bostan Sokağı, a treasure trove of small antiques and handmade objects.

Strolling down to the Bosphorus

The side of İstiklâl facing the Bosphorus was where most envoys planted legations amid the vineyards. It is now full of apartments, but many intriguing lanes run between them. Of the few that go all the way to the Bosphorus, **Kumbaracı Yokuşu** is the easiest to negotiate, and a useful short cut to the tram that goes to the Old City.

If you are lucky enough to get a table at **Yeni Lokanta** (near the top, at No 66 – lunch is easier than dinner), you will enjoy the young Civan Er's inventive Turkish cuisine. Very much part of the "small plates" craze sweeping Istanbul, the menu has delicious *mantı* (meat dumplings), spicy Antep *sucuk* (sausage) served with warm *fava* (dried-broad-bean purée), and *kadayıf*-wrapped custard fritters with smoked buffalo-milk ice cream and honey.

Halfway down on the right, at No 57/6, a discreet door and wobbly lift take you to another good rooftop for a drink. The **Kumbaracı Leb-i Derya** is pricey, but worth it for the view.

On the way, in a row of low houses facing the Russian Consulate, **Moria** (No 69) carries delicately hand-stitched bags in yellow suede or naturally dyed tan leather. Across the road is the entrance to perhaps the prettiest street in Beyoğlu, Tercüman Çıkmazı. Pass under the Italianate bridge to reach **Arte Istanbul** at No 16, for exhibitions, workshops and musical events.

Farther down Kumbaracı, look out for the wooden façade next to the Halil Ağa Fountain. A tiny handwritten sign in the window at **Camekân** (No 42) gives little away about the contents, but inside are displays of unusual glass artworks from Cam Ocağı, a world-famous Istanbul studio. On the right, **İsmail Hız** (No 21) presides over the perfect wood-carver's shop, with a window full of curtain-rail ends and judges' gavels. Opposite, catch a glimpse of a two-metre-long full-rigged sailing ship in the darkened space inside No 26. **Cumhur Güzel**'s model ships take up to three months to make. (For an appointment, call +90 535 279 9446.) In a large basement farther down, **Oxar** (No 14) turns out handsome leather belts costing just TL25.

A second lane off İstiklâl between Tünel and Galatasaray that is worth exploring is the picturesque **Postacılar Sokağı**. Go past the Russian Consulate, and you will find it on the corner of the contemporary art space ARTER. Drop in on **Eller** (No 4), who for 30 years have made replicas of ancient jewellery, before taking a dogleg past the fine **Glavani Apartments**, into what feels like a stage set for *Les Misérables*. On the right are the dark-red walls of the Spanish apartments and the Spanish chapel; on the left hangs the flag of the Ecuadorian Consulate. The graffiti are intense, the steps a haunt for students shyly nursing bottles of strong Bomonti beer. Venetian merchants lived here, perhaps even Casanova.

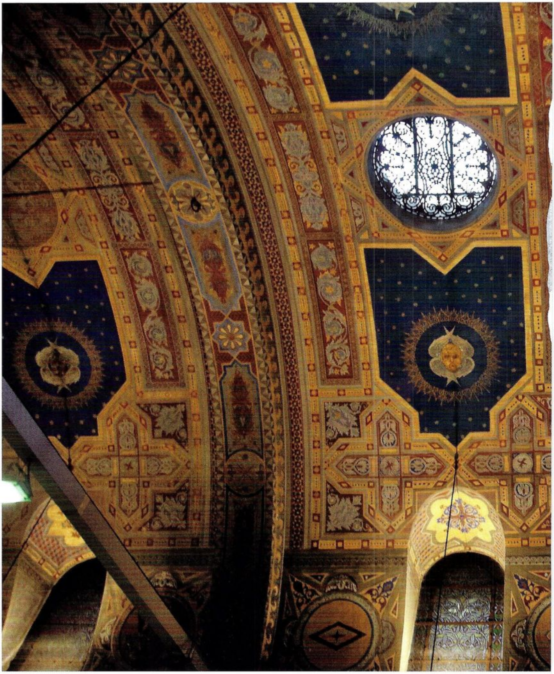
At the bottom of Postacılar is Tomtom Kaptan Sokağı, a small square that looks like another stage set, with the gates to the Italian ambassador's Palazzo di Venezia, a French courthouse, the balustraded garden of the Palais de France and the tsars' looming Neoclassical palace. Facing the Italians is a former convent, now a smart hotel, the **Tomtom Suites**. Its top-floor restaurant is a discreet place to rest your feet with a drink as you imbibe the almost Orientalist view of the Topkapı. ◆

FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

TOP AND ABOVE THE ADAHAN HOTEL, A CONVERSION OF 1875 APARTMENTS BUILT FOR THE WEALTHY CAMONDO BANKING FAMILY. THE HIGH-CEILINGED ROOMS AND MARBLE STAIRS HAVE BEEN PAINSTAKINGLY RESTORED

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

THE CHURCHES, LEGATIONS AND TRADING POSTS OF OLD PERA ARE A REWARDING WAY FOR VISITORS TO GET A HANDLE ON BUSY BEYOĞLU



Faith in the city

TIM CORNWELL EXPLORES THE CHURCHES OF PERA

It is not the age of the buildings, or the individual artworks, that impress in touring the churches around İstiklâl Caddesi. The major churches of Beyoğlu are not ancient by Byzantine standards – the area was constantly rebuilt after fires and earthquakes. The appeal is rooted in the overall impression, and the variety of fairly recent architectural styles, while the hidden approaches to the churches give them a surprise element. Pass through an archway in the Balık Pazarı (Fish Market) just off İstiklâl to find a soaring white marble edifice entirely concealed from the street. Üç **Horan Kilisesi** (the Armenian Church of Three Altars) was designed by the famous architectural Balyan family. Iron girders across the barrel-vaulted ceiling create a magnificent acoustic. Corinthian columns at the back rise to the screened balconies for women.

Matching red-brick apartment buildings from the early 1900s guard the approach to the Roman Catholic **Church of Saint Antoine** (St Anthony of Padua) at Galatasaray. This Franciscan church, also in red brick, was built by Giulio Mongeri and Edoardo de Nari in Gothic style from 1906, after a 1724 church was demolished to make way for the new tramway. It has a fine, uplifting feel, with floreats of stone on top of narrow pillars, and blue vaulted ceilings.

Close to Saint Antoine's, steep steps descend from İstiklâl to the church of **St Mary Draperis**, where the painted barrel-vaulted ceiling makes an impression, though the Venetian School paintings don't stand up to closer scrutiny. The icon of

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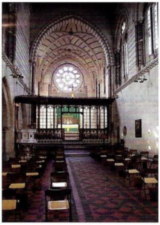

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MAIN PICTURE: THE VAULT OF THE CHURCH OF ST MARY DRAPERIS, ON İSTIKLÂL CADDESI, REBUILT IN 1769
BELOW LEFT: THE 1906 FRANCISCAN CHURCH OF SAINT ANTOINE AT GALATASARAY; GEORGE EDMUND STREET'S 1858 ANGLICAN 'CRIMEAN CHURCH' IN GALATA (RIGHT)

IRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

the Virgin Mary behind the altar may have been rescued from previous fires, but the building itself dates from 1769.

The 15th-century Dominican Church of **Sts Peter and Paul,** just below the Galata Tower, was rebuilt by Gaspare Fossati in 1843. In 1475 the friars' original church near the shore was converted into the **Arap Camii.** In a familiar pattern in Galata, fire destroyed two subsequent churches. Towards the back there is a striking crucifix, of Christ contorted in agony. The cupola over the altar, blue and studded with gold stars, is much more like an Eastern or Syriac Orthodox church in style than a Roman Catholic one.

There's a very British feel to the 1858 Anglican Christ Church, known as the **Crimean Church.** Home-made ginger beer after the service, and ducks and a surprisingly agile tortoise in the grounds. A Londoner quickly feels at home: the high pointed arches are reminiscent of the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand, the best-known work of the church's architect, George Edmund Street. It was conceived as a memorial to the Crimean War, but it is not sombre in feel – Street opted for a "French Gothic" style.

Centre of excellencies

PATRICIA DAUNT EXTOLS THE PALATIAL EMBASSIES THAT ADORN THE HEIGHTS OF OLD PERA

Cosmopolitan, trendsetting, with distractions to suit almost every taste, 21st-century Beyoğlu holds an unusual extra to whet the enthusiasm of the most jaded tourist: the pleasure of seeking out the "winter embassies" so relished by the ambassadors and envoys to the Ottoman Porte. They are the grandest diplomatic buildings of any of the imperial capitals and, with the exception of the Italian, are all more-or-less 19th-century contemporaries. Extravagantly built, referred to as "palaces", once endowed with prisons, chapels and throne rooms, they stand in their own grounds protected by high walls and fine gates. Demoted to consulates since the embassies transferred to Ankara, all but the "German Palace" are within a stone's throw of the Grand' Rue de Péra – or İstiklâl Caddesi, as it became in the 1920s.

The first ambassadors to the Porte lived in Galata, but bubonic plague and overcrowding led them to decamp outside the medieval walls to the vine-clad hills of Pera – today's Beyoğlu – where the Venetians were the first to move in 1517, renting a wooden villa tucked into the hills below what is now İstiklâl Caddesi. The French soon followed, acquiring the estate next door and enjoying the same idyllic view overlooking the Seraglio and beyond to the Islands in the Sea of Marmara. A century later, the Dutch were the first nation to receive as a gift from the sultan a parcel of land on the Grand' Rue itself.

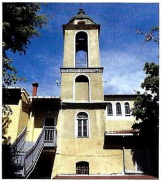
Before the great fires of the early 19th century, which swept through Pera time and again, the finest embassy of all was that of the Swedes, standing on the Grand' Rue. Some say that it was completed with monies sent to Istanbul by the Protestant faithful for the buying and freeing of Christian slaves. It was reduced to ashes in 1818, but its west-facing garden with its view over the Bosphorus remained, as it still does, to "heal the spirits". Today's charming Neoclassical 1870 building, by the Austrian architect Domenico Pulgher, is sheltered from the bustle of the street by walls and trees.

During the mid-18th century, the Russians also acquired a piece of land on the Grand' Rue. It is said that a shipload of sacred Russian earth was brought in at the command of Catherine the Great so that her embassy "should stand on Russian soil". The palm-fringed Neoclassical entrance façade is that of a palace of no uncertain grandeur. It was the first embassy to be rebuilt following a catastrophic fire in 1831. A miracle of good Russian workmanship, it was completed in 1845 by the Swiss Fossati brothers, who would go on to complete more than 50 commissions for the sultan. The interim embassy, the austerely grand Narmanlı Han, across the road, became the consulate.

Perhaps to rival the Russians and the Swedes, in 1750 the Venetian Bailo replaced a lath-and-plaster structure with an imposing brick-and-stone palace standing in an Italianate garden; it can be glimpsed today from Tomtom Kaptan Sokağı. It is the only one of these embassies never to have burned down. With the demise of the Serene Republic, it changed hands, passing from France to Austria, then to a united Italy, to become the residence of the Italian ambassador. The Palazzo di Venezia remains the finest of all the residences of visiting ambassadors from Ankara. Its amenities can be guessed at from the fact that 14 new marble bathrooms were installed in the course of refurbishment in 1992.

The French ambassador's problem following the 1831 fire was whether his embassy should be rebuilt in wood or in stone. In order to secure the contract, the Parisian architect Pierre-Léonard Laurécisque produced innovative designs, complete with grossly underestimated costings. It was a building that enabled the ambassador for the first time to live, entertain and work under the same roof. The 1837 Palais de France stands in all its grandeur on a raised terrace of levelled rubble, surrounded by big trees, clad in the finest fire-resistant Maltese stone. In 1992, ahead of President Mitterrand's visit, it was extensively refurbished. From its grounds, complete with ancient prison, the bell of the Chapel of Saint-Louis-des-Français rings out every Sunday.

FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG



BRIAN MCKEE

TOP THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR'S 1750 PALAZZO VENEZIA
ABOVE THE BELL TOWER OF THE FRENCH CHAPEL OF ST-LOUIS-DES-FRANÇAIS BELOW THE ORNATE 1837 FAÇADE OF THE PALAIS DE FRANCE

Delays and interruptions, running over the course of many years, are not unusual for the British Foreign Office. It was 13 years after the 1831 fire had destroyed Lord Elgin's embassy, overlooking the Golden Horn beneath the Fish and Flower Markets, before it was decided to rebuild in Beyoğlu. William James Smith, disciple of Charles Barry, who, with Augustus Pugin, designed the Palace of Westminster, was the architect of the imposing rectangular pile built on a site given by Sultan Abdülmecid. Pera House took ten years to complete and was itself extensively damaged by fire in 1870 and again in 1998. The terrorist bomb that claimed 16 lives in 2003 necessitated extensive alterations, including the relocation of the entrance to the southern side, and the erection of a sturdy blank wall in place of the elegant entrance lodges beside the Fish Market.

Following the devastation caused by the 1831 fire, the Dutch delayed rebuilding until the Russians, French and British had all but completed their new palaces in the slowly recovering quarter. In 1859 they commissioned Giovanni Battista Barborini to design a small Palladian villa. Pretty as a picture, it is set off İstiklâl Caddesi, while the entrance to the 1711 chapel, reinforced on the foundations of the old prison, is now reached from Postacılar Sokağı.

A mammoth, lacking in elegance, "an unrelieved mass without architectural worth", is how Kaiser Wilhelm I's embassy was described when completed in 1877. Now just one of many large buildings below Taksim Square, Hubert Goebbel's Neo-Renaissance celebration of the might of the German Reich no longer "stands out like a sore thumb", but it retains its "blessed place" above Dolmabahçe Palace. It concedes nothing in size or grandeur to its rivals, as any passer-by on İnönü Caddesi can see.

Sadly, the splendours of the interiors of these relics of an Ottoman past are inaccessible to the public. But it is still delightful to while away a day in modern Beyoğlu by viewing the exteriors of the foreign palaces of yesteryear.

BRIAN MCKEE

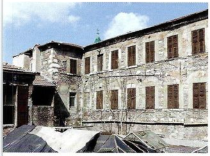
Hive of inactivity

MALIKA BROWNE WANDERS AROUND A GHOST HAN IN GALATA DESTINED FOR A MAKEOVER

The best way to explore the Saint Pierre Han is to cancel appointments for the next two hours and take a torch. A smile, eyebrows raised in gentle enquiry, will get you up the worn marble staircase and over the threshold, past the small teashop at the bottom of this massive ancient complex of seven buildings on narrow Eski Banka Sokağı (Old Bank Street), above and parallel to Bankalar Caddesi. Depending on the day you visit, you may find yourself escorted by the part-time security guard, who moonlights as an amateur historian, or invited in for tea downstairs. Or you may not see another soul.

Over the past few years, the Saint Pierre Han has been cleared of its Zola-esque workshops in preparation for conversion into a cultural centre for Bahçeşehir University. The vaulted rooms are stripped bare, awaiting interpretation, past and future.

Built in 1771 by the Comte de Saint-Priest, "as the lodging place and bank of the French Nation" (as we are told by the writer John Freely), the han takes its name from the neighbouring church of Sts Peter and Paul. There is also a plaque commemorating the birth in 1762, in a wooden house on the same site (destroyed in a fire), of the French poet André Chénier (Linda Kelly describes him in CORNUCOPIA 2 as the "father of French Romantic poetry… who produced some of the most moving documents of the Revolution"). The son of a French cloth trader and a Greek woman, Chénier's umbilical cord was cut in Istanbul, only for his head to be sliced off by a guillotine in Paris 31 years later.



A few hints as to the building's history linger here and there. The faded lettering that spells CAISSES on a lintel speaks of the building's past as the French traders' bank before the Ottoman Bank was set up across the street (now home to SALT Galata). The bank's waiting rooms still bear some panels of wainscoting, and shallow wardrobes for hanging coats. The glass roof, a traditional feature of Ottoman bank architecture, continues to let in light, and now rain. The lack of electricity in most of the building – which is probably just as well, when you glimpse what is left of the old Bakelite switchboards in some rooms – only adds to the atmosphere.

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS: BRIAN MCKEE

The han has housed various businesses: allegedly Turkey's first-ever computer centre, and Turkey's first denim manufacturer, the splendidly named Muhteşem Kot, an Albanian tailor who discovered denim on a trip to France in the 1940s. *Kot pantalonlar* became very popular with villagers and workers because they were so tough. They fell victim to the open market in the Özal period, and the firm ceased production in 1992, ironically the year after Turkey's international jeans brand, MAVI, was born. The firm's poster recommends washing the jeans in cold or sea water, to avoid shrinkage. The han was filled with the "appalling smell of linseed oil" used to waterproof the denim to make workwear for Etibank security guards.

There is still a spotless working mustard-powder factory to the left of the first landing, where the effect of a few coats of paint and a broom shows what the rest of the building must have been like when it was active. The top floor, with its fine wood-and-iron staircase, is an Ottoman addition, and you can still see where heavy machinery stood or was fixed to the walls. One or two workshops are still active, punching out plastic widgets for car parts or quietly making metal springs. There are rumours that three tunnels burrow from the Saint Pierre Han to the Golden Horn, to Taksim, and to the Galata Bridge, but that they are now full of water. Those who continue to the top will be rewarded with views of the Galata Tower and the green Sts Peter and Paul bell tower just visible over the rooftops.

1933
mustard powder
ÖZYER
100 % Natural

FAR LEFT THE DOMINICAN CONVENT OF STS PETER AND PAUL SEEN FROM THE SAINT PIERRE HAN
ABOVE FADED GRANDEUR: INSIDE THE SAINT PIERRE HAN
ABOVE LEFT THE COAT OF ARMS OF THE COMTE DE SAINT-PRIEST, WHO BUILT THE HAN IN 1771 AS A FRENCH TRADING POST
LEFT THE MUSTARD-POWDER FACTORY IS STILL FUNCTIONING

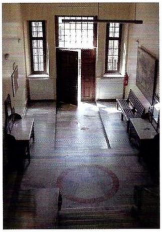
Seafarers' sanctuary

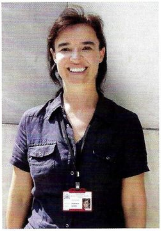
Malika Browne on the old British Seamen's Hospital

Charles Holden, architect of the unexpected British Seamen's Hospital, visible on the Beyoğlu skyline by the Galata Tower, is most famous for London's Senate House, many London Underground stations, as well as 55 Broadway. He was in his twenties when he designed this hospital in 1903, soon after winning the commission for the renowned Bristol Central Library.

Built on a steep rise above the earlier 1860s British consulate with its magnificent marble staircase, its tower allowed the hospital to keep watch for incoming vessels and prepare wards according to the flags. The three wings of the cruciform plan maximised exposure to light and fresh air, and made quarantine possible.

Access to what is now the busy state-run St George Eye Hospital is easy – no feigned squinting is required. On any weekday, simply walk in through the iron gates (which still bear the letters BSH), up the pebble mosaic path, and gaze at the twisting staircase, the marble of the entrance hall and the long, elegant balconies, where sailors must have sunbathed. ◆

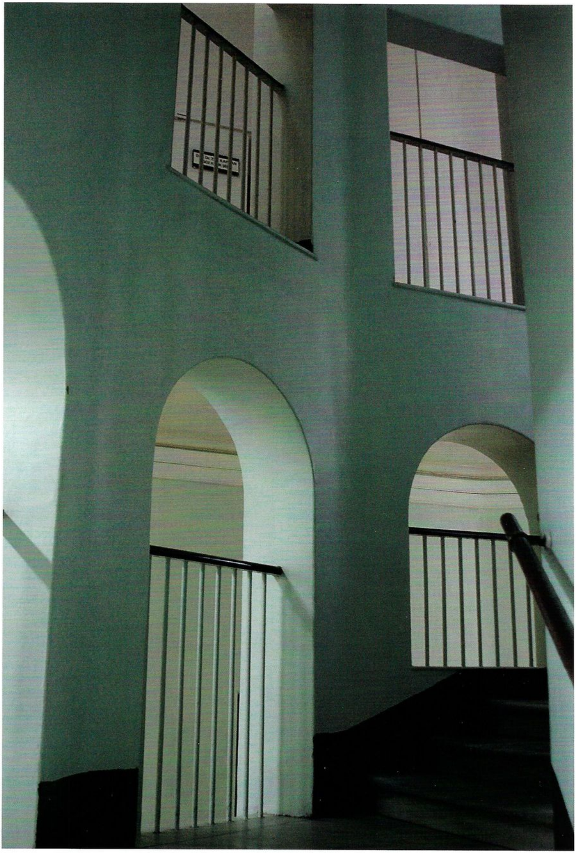




JAMES HILL & C°.
100A QUEEN VICTORIA ST
LONDON

Opposite, clockwise from top left The lookout tower; one of the hospital's wings; the stairs of the old British consulate under the hospital; Bircan Şahin, head nurse at the St George Eye Hospital; the old consulate hall
Above, from top The hospital entrance; a mosaic path with the letters BSH (British Seamen's Hospital); James Hill of London supplied the latest in door technology
Right The tower staircase

All photographs: Fritz von der Schulenburg



DANCING UNTIL DAYBREAK

BLACK MUSICIANS, WHITE RUSSIAN PRINCESSES, TURKISH FLAPPERS... DURING THE JAZZ AGE, BEYOĞLU WAS A FERMENT OF MODERNITY AND DECADENCE.

BY THOMAS ROUECHÉ

THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE BELOW: DANCING GIRLS STRUT THEIR STUFF ON STAGE AT MAXIM'S, THE TAKSIM NIGHTCLUB OPENED IN 1921
TOP RIGHT: AN EARLY SELFIE. PHOTOGRAPHER SELAHATTIN GİZ (FAR RIGHT) TURNS THE CAMERA ON HIMSELF AND DRINKING COMPANIONS IN MAXIM'S BAR

Writing in 1922 for the *Toronto Star*, the young Ernest Hemingway, yet to make his name as one of the 20th century's most consummate prose stylists and infamous drinkers, mixing his metaphors somewhat, compared nightlife in Europe to "a sort of strange disease" that had always existed but had been "fanned into flame" since the war and burned an entire generation.

The 23-year-old reporter admired the civilised and amusing Paris scene. Berlin was "sordid, desperate and vicious", while Madrid was merely dull. Nothing, for him, compared for excitement to the nightlife of Constantinople. Hemingway was in his element in the cut and thrust of old "Constan". He evokes a society of insomniacs, wakeful for most of the day and all through the night. "No one who has any pretentions of conforming to custom dines before nine o'clock at night. The theatres open at ten – the night clubs open at two... the disreputable night clubs at four..."

The Jazz Age was in full swing, and Constantinople was "doing a sort of dance of death". Jazz, like its sisters from the bustling urban streets of the early 20th century, the tango, flamenco and the Greek rembetika, boiled up and spilled over from Paris to Berlin, from Cairo to Bombay and Shanghai. In the fecund breeding ground of Pera (today's Beyoğlu), in a city whose imperial purpose was gradually slipping

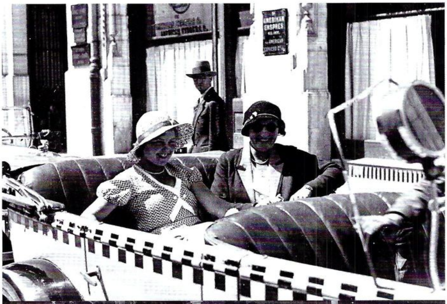
ALL PHOTOGRAPHS: YAPI KREDI SELAHATTIN GIZ COLLECTION away, the sounds of George Gershwin's 'Swanee' echoed through the nightclubs; dancers adorned themselves with peacock feathers and learnt to Charleston; noble Russian refugees waited on tables; and opium and cocaine fed the fervid imaginations of the city's chancers and *arrivistes*. Jazz, which terrified the Establishment across the Western world, titillated the international avant-garde and gave voice to the mood of the "Lost Generation" across Europe.

Turkey, born out of the maelstrom of the Great War and poised to embark on a dramatic period of modernisation, couldn't quite decide what to make of it. Following its occupation in 1918, the imperial city had been inundated with foreigners. Occupying Italian, French, British and American troops patrolled the streets. Refugees from Odessa – White Russians fleeing the Bolshevik revolution – peopled the restaurants and cafés, or begged and loitered on corners. The bars filled with journalists, chancers and writers, the flotsam of the war cast up on the strand of Pera. Mufty-zade Kemal Ziya Bey, a Turk who had lived in America for a decade, put it succinctly: "Pera shelters all the foreigners in Constantinople, from the high commissioners of different nations and their immediate retinues down to the worst kind of adventurers. And of course there are many more adventurers than high commissioners."

The arrival of General Wrangel's fleet from Odessa in 1920 dramatically changed the face of Constantinople. Until its eventual closure in 2011, the tenacity and resilience of the famous restaurant Rejans gave the false sense that the city's Russian colonisation had happened only recently – not almost a century ago. People who remember Istanbul in the 1960s repeat the familiar lore of ballerinas, concert musicians and Tolstoyan princesses working behind the tills at Rejans. The story of the Western sophisticate, passing through Constantinople, who is moved to tears when he recognises his waitress as a grande dame of St Petersburg society he had known in Paris before the war is a staple of Beyoğlu mythology.

The reality of the Russian exodus was far grimmer than such fairy tales. Of the 150,000 émigrés who made their way through the city, 30,000 were still there in 1922. Half were destitute, fed by relief agencies; the other half found jobs however and wherever possible. *Constantinople Today*, a book published in 1921, related: "Russian refugees are everywhere, selling flowers, kewpie dolls, oil paintings of Constantinople, cakes and trinkets, books and newspapers printed in Russian. They sleep in the open streets and on the steps of the mosques. They loaf, beg, work when they can find a job, and sometimes sob with hunger. A few Russians have been lucky enough to find positions as waitresses or coatboys. A princess may bring the patron's coffee, and a general hand him his stick. Professors, ex-millionaires, women of high birth beseech one to buy cigarettes or paper flowers."

Yet the arrival of the White Russians brought an influx of spectacular talent to the city. Vernon Duke (née Vladimir Dukelsky), later composer of 'April in Paris', was 16 when he played at nightclubs across the city. Alexander Vertinsky, Nicolas Slonimsky, Constantin Alajalov and Boris Poplavsky all brought ferocious musical and artistic talent. There were enough performers for the Russian community to stage a highly regarded production of *Sheherazade*, as well as



YAPI KREDI SELAHATTIN GIZ COLLECTION

TOP TRAVELLING IN STYLE: AN OPEN-TOP TAXI PASSES IN FRONT OF AN EARLY AMERICAN EXPRESS OFFICE

ABOVE BLACK TIE AND COCKTAIL DRESSES: DANCING THE NIGHT AWAY IN THE GARDEN BAR IN TEPEBAŞI, A BEYOĞLU FIXTURE FROM THE 1920S – NOW A MULTISTOREY CAR PARK

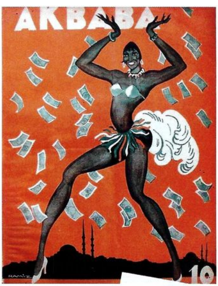
Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène*, "a typical example of the 'decadent' St Petersburg tastes of the pre-revolutionary years", in the eyes of the historian Alexander Vasiliev. Visitors to the city remarked on the wide availability of high-quality musical and theatrical diversion. "For the lovers of music they play all that is best in the realm of music; for the dancers they have learned American Jazz. But the real attraction of the Russian restaurant," claimed *The New York Times* in July 1922, "is the Russian *dame de service*, and because of her all Constantinople – from the highest diplomats and officials... to the humblest citizens – now dines '*à la Russe*'."

This efflorescence of cultural life was especially noticeable after dark. Alexander Vertinsky, the pierrot and singer, opened La Rose Noire, a nightclub that rapidly became infamous for its sybaritic dissipation and the vast quantities of opium and cocaine consumed by its patrons. The man working as coat-checker was said to be a former Russian senator. For its patrons, as Vertinsky put it, "there was only one wish – to forget. Forget at whatever cost. First they played baccarat, then dined, then drank champitre. Men got together in small groups and drank, remembering old St Petersburg".

Many Russian women turned to prostitution, though the tale of such a consummate showman as Vernon Duke might be taken with a pinch of salt. He tells of a young Russian man who, soliciting, "opened his mouth to make the usual overtures when the girl let out a wild shriek and fled, sobbing – it was the boy's mother, the languid baroness".

Among those who came from Russia, perhaps the most curious was Frederick Thomas, the eponymous "Black Russian" of Vladimir Alexandrov's biography. His famous nightclub, Maxim's, on Sıraselviler Caddesi, was named after his original *café chantant* in Moscow (in turn named after the more famous Maxim's of Paris), where the Mississippi-born African-American had become a major figure on the entertainment scene before the Russian Revolution. He fled to Constantinople, where his attempts to establish a similar nightclub empire were less successful. He managed, however, to capture the mood of the moment, and, together with the Garden Bar, Maxim's stands out as a fixture of the 1920s scene in the city.

Maxim's opened in November 1921, not the first of Thomas's ventures, but certainly the most successful. Mufty-zade Kemal Ziya Bey, who had spent a decade in America, describes one of Thomas's previous ventures, Stella, in his memoir, *Speaking of the Turks*: "Everyone seems intoxicated and the weird music of a regular jazz band composed of genuine American Negroes fires the blood of the rollicking crowd to demonstrations unknown even to the Bowery in its flourishing days before the Volstead Act. Much bejewelled and rouged 'noble' waitresses sit, drink and smoke at the tables of their own clients. The proprietor of the place, an American coloured man who was established in Russia before the Bolshevik revolution and who – it seems – protected and helped most efficiently some British and American officers and relief workers at the time of the revolution, is watching the crowd in a rather aloof manner. Frankly he seems to me more human than his clients; at least he is sober and acts with consideration and politeness, which is not the case with most of the people who are here. Not one real Turk is in sight."



ABOVE JOSEPHINE BAKER, 'THE BLACK PEARL', PERFORMED IN ISTANBUL IN 1934 AND AGAIN IN 1973 (FOR THE OPENING OF THE BOSPHORUS BRIDGE) RIGHT FREDERICK THOMAS, 'THE BLACK RUSSIAN', FOUNDER OF THE ICONIC MAXIM'S IN TAKSIM

Thomas faced some hot competition. The Garden Bar entranced its clients with a mix of vaudeville and music hall at the Petits Champs, a pleasure garden that is now the parking lot on Meşrutiyet Caddesi. But what Maxim's illustrates most intriguingly is the black American influence on the nightlife of the city – the many black American soldiers and jazzers who found colour lines easier to cross in post-war Europe than back home, in the interwar years. The role of Paris in nurturing the career of Josephine Baker (who cancelled a gig in Istanbul in 1927, before playing there in 1934) is well known, and Weimar-era Berlin is likewise celebrated. Black Americans like Sam Wooding took his band on tour across Europe, stopping repeatedly in Constantinople, and jazzers George Duncan and Billy Brooks took up long-term residence in Cairo, from where they wrote a column for *The Chicago Defender*.

Maxim's hosted groups from New York such as the Palm Beach Five. Trumpeters Tommy Ladnier and Arthur Briggs played Constantinople's bars. What is so interesting is the mélange of cultures and styles: many bars and clubs were Greek-owned, yet boasted Russian and black American entertainment. Vernon Duke captures this astonishing world in his memoir. "The rose of jazz, healthy and blooming, was by now firmly planted on the European shore of the Bosphorus. Mayak patrons began to request 'Hindustan', 'Tell Me' and 'Till We Meet Again'. I promptly purchased all three, also Irving Berlin's earlier successes and a thing mysteriously entitled 'Swanee' by a man improbably called Geo. Gershwin."

The British assistant military attaché, Harold Armstrong, thrilled to a city that was "gay and wicked and delightful. The cafés were full of drinking and dancing... It was good when it was hot to stroll into the garden of the Petits Champs des Morts, while the night hid the refuse in the graveyard below, and watch the cheap artists on the stage and drink black coffee and discuss the crowd that sauntered by under the lime trees and bandy jokes in broken French with the *demimondaines* and play at being a millionaire."

The nightlife naturally caused deep concern among the more traditional residents of the city. The massive influx of refugees, with their alien mores and morals, shocked Turkish society. A document entitled "Petition of the Ladies of Istanbul", and signed by "twenty-eight odalisques from several harems and the legal wife of Gazi Edhem Pasha", deplored the White Russian community and its effect on the city: "They have robbed the Turkish male, taking away his last property, they have destroyed our families, perverted our sons, and become bad examples for our daughters... in just one or two years they have managed to bring more harm than all the Russian armies over the centuries...

"In Beyoğlu, in the neighbourhood

between Tünel and Taksim, you can find twenty-five Russian bars, cafés and restaurants that are not controlled by the police or the sanitary services. In those dens of iniquity hundreds of Turkish youths are ruined every day, losing their health, wealth and virtue. The same thing is happening to some Turkish women, who are forced to deal with women of dubious behaviour who have made their way into every level of society."

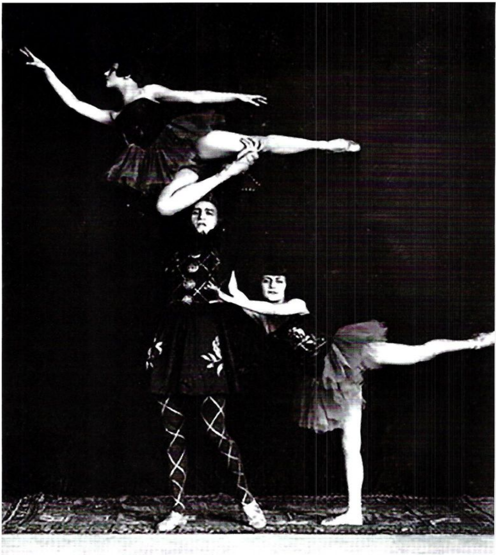
In his novel *Sodom ve Gomore*, the early Republican writer Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu paints a grotesque image of the occupying forces, who controlled the city from 1919 until its liberation by Mustafa Kemal in 1922. Doffing his hat to Marcel Proust, Karaosmanoğlu presents us with Major Will, a British police officer "pink like a new-born pig", who throws a decadent party in a Bosphorus yalı filled with pornographic art. The "Babylonian gathering" is peopled by the perverse: Marlow is a British captain who has come to Istanbul "with the dream of being ravished by half-wild handsome-faced Turks", and two "Sodomite girls" are spotted "entwined as one".

Karaosmanoğlu's polemic is unsurprising within the context of the long-fought and brutal Turkish War of Independence. The occupation and the years that followed, far from being "gay and wicked and delightful", were for many, and in particular for the city's Turkish population, a period of misery. At the same time the author gives a sense of the ambivalence many felt over this explosion of nightlife, echoed across Europe and America in popular responses to the jazz craze.

While the artistic avant-garde of cities such as Paris may have adopted it with relish, jazz, with its close relationship to the traditions of music hall and burlesque and the physical contortions of its dances, was a challenge to the rigid order of European culture, and its association with decadence and dissipation threatened modernity itself.

With the eventual capitulation of Istanbul to the armies of Mustafa Kemal, the 1920s saw the beginnings of his most ambitious reforms – of dress, of language, of alphabet. Yet the expected clampdown on debauchery in Constantinople did not happen. Mustafa Kemal continued to govern from his new capital in Ankara. He toured much of the new nation and even passed through the Bosphorus without visiting the city. And jazz continued to be a feature of life there into the 1930s.

As the Turkish Republic's first president, Mustafa Kemal exhorted his people to adopt modern, *alafranga* habits of dancing, drinking and entertaining, yet jazz, as performed by African-Americans, occupied a grey area on a spectrum of East vs West. In a Turkey where *il faut être absolument moderne*, jazz's ambiguous relationship to modernity was a cause for alarm. Although Mustafa Kemal indulged in jazz dances, he was more comfortable with the controlled elegance of the foxtrot than the rubbery legs of the Charleston.



ABOVE ACROBATS AND DANCERS IN PERA BETWEEN THE WARS RIGHT THE TRUMPETER ARTHUR BRIGGS PLAYED ISTANBUL WITH A HUNGARIAN JAZZ BAND IN 1926

These anxieties about jazz were compounded by the emancipation of women across Europe throughout this period. In Turkey, this was a process eagerly watched by Western commentators, who were perhaps more preoccupied with their ideas of the mysteries of the harem, and their unease at women's suffrage in their own countries, than by the realities of life in Turkey at the time. "Turkish Flappers Find their New Freedoms Entrancing" announced a headline in *The New York Times* in 1925.

As has been often noted, Mustafa Kemal's project was far more progressive than that of many of his country's Western neighbours – women's suffrage was achieved by 1930, 15 years before the same rights were extended to their sisters in France, and 40 years before Switzerland followed suit.

What is perhaps most astonishing, however, is the phenomenon of the Turkish "flapper". "Russian bobs, knee-high frocks and Deauville sandals are almost as common on the Grand' Rue de Péra as on Broadway..." *The New York Times* continues. "She goes to the latest *thé dansants*, where she does the latest jazz steps... her mama has the permanent wave, plays bridge, drinks cocktails, reads sex novels, gets divorced and studies psychoanalysis." Indeed Mustafa Kemal's divorce from Latife Hanım in August 1925 was seen as "ultra-modern" in Western countries still tied to traditional ideas about marriage. *The Times of India* noted: "decidedly the Unchanging East is changing more and more rapidly. A little more of this and we Western dwellers at Constantinople will begin to feel rather old-fashioned."

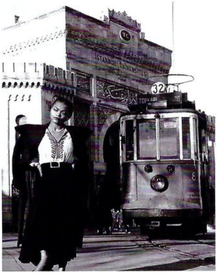
A revealing snapshot of the new Turkish woman comes from a *Hull Daily Mail* article of 1926: "She is an amazing reality, this Turkish Flapper, with her high-heeled slippers, Paris gowns and odalisque eyes. The slippers adorn feet which Charleston with abandon and dexterity, the gowns outline a silhouette as chic as Gloria Swanson's and the eyes – well, the eyes have all the challenge of a new horizon, with all the lure of the centuries of harem life behind."

The jazz craze reached its most ridiculous heights in the proposed conversion of historical buildings into nightclubs. In 1926, a municipal casino opened in Yıldız Palace. The Western press went wild: "Slaves of Sultan Gamble in Palace", "Turkey's Monte Carlo" – "jazz bands will, of course, play fox trots and Charlestons where 'Arab Izzet' hatched his intrigues". The American press claimed that the "American Association of Jazz Bands" had petitioned the government to turn Ayasofya into "a temple of jazz". Two years later, *The New York Times* reported that Dolmabahçe Palace was wanted for "a dance hall" where "the jazz-adepts of Constantinople look forward to sliding over the parquet floor of the throne room".

In July 1927, Mustafa Kemal finally returned to Constantinople for the first time since its liberation four long years earlier. The imperial city, humbled by war and occupation, had shrunk to half its pre-war size; large numbers of its ethnically diverse population had left. The Gazi's visit was greeted with relief and elation by the city's population – *The New York Times* commented, "to the once intransigent, reactionary City of Constantinople he came, he saw, he conquered". Mustafa Kemal "surprised little cafés along the Bosphorus by suddenly appearing in his yacht and paralyzing the inadequate jazz band that such modest resorts boast by jazzing with the astonished and nervous flappers he found there".

Yet, as everywhere else, Istanbul's Jazz Age found it hard to survive the exigencies of the Great Depression. Frederick Thomas died in penury in 1928, a year after losing Maxim to his creditors. Another four years later, in 1932, *The New York Times* had noted a change: "the Negro orchestras will be greatly missed and it is not unlikely that the Petit Champ and Maxim Cabaret will be forced to close". By 1936 the scene was a grim one, to be sure, as one traveller noted, tracing the decline right back to the end of occupation:

"Hardly a gay city Constantinople. At the Stamboul Club, pessimistic Englishmen will speak regretfully of the old days. Even after the war the town preserved its old animation, as long, at least, as the Allied Armies of Occupation remained. The best cabaret turns in all Europe gravitated here. But early in October 1923 the Allies left. The day of their departure, celebrated every year with patriotic services and much display of the Turkish flag, crescent and star on a red field, marked the end of Constantinople as a seat of gay frivolity. There are still pseudo night-clubs, but they are scarcely worth the traveller's time. Places like the Siyah Kedi, or Black Cat, and Siyah Gül, Black Rose, are holes in the wall. The Garden Bar is pretentiously tawdry, Maxim's is large, draughty and plebeian."



Eartha Kitt stops a trolleybus with a pose in Beyazit Square, 1949. The singer arrived in Istanbul just as the new craze for jazz was taking off all over the city

Briggs zenekara Konstantinápolyban.

The post-war years in Constantinople were unique, and complex. Stories of Turkish flappers and black American jazz bands belie what was a dark and difficult period. Constantinople was closer in mood to the drug-addled, war-weary Berlin than the glittering, victorious Paris. For every White Russian musician, ballet dancer or impresario, there were thousands more starving on the outskirts of the city. Still, these wild years of gay abandon laid the foundations of a long relationship between Istanbul and jazz, which would return to the city in full force in the 1950s.

Just as in the capitals of Western Europe the *jeunesse dorée* were playing with new forms of modernity, art and culture, so their counterparts in Constantinople were doing the same. All over Europe, jazz's "decadent modernity" was threatening Establishment culture. And, for a while, the bright young things of the Grand' Rue de Péra (renamed İstiklâl Caddesi in 1927) danced the Charleston on the fringes of social acceptability. ◆

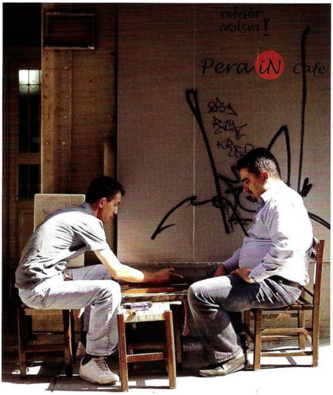
For help in writing this article Thomas Roueché would like to thank Carole Woodall of Colorado University, author of a forthcoming book, 'The Decadent Modern: Cocaine, Jazz, and the Charleston in 1920s Istanbul'.
Thomas Roueché: tom.roueche@gmail.com

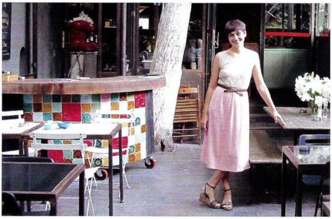
Vladimir Alexandrov's biography of Frederick Thomas, 'The Black Russian', is available from cornucopia.net at £17.99

Cihangir and Çukurcuma

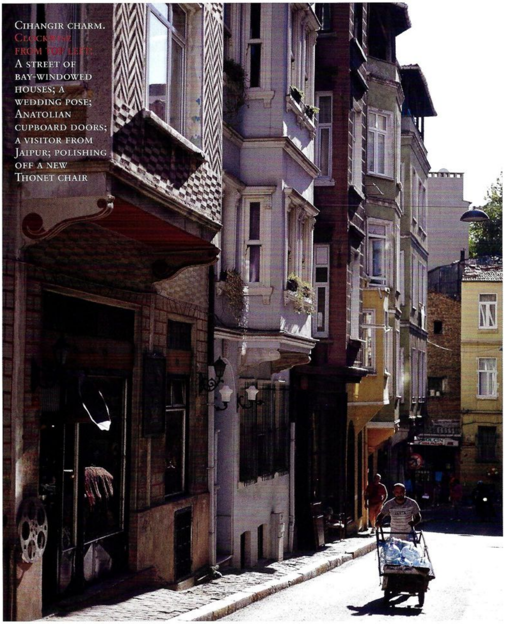
BOSPHORUS BOHEMIANS

While upbeat, raffish Cihangir is an enjoyable mix of decadence and gentility, in the antiques quarter of Çukurcuma you can browse through bric-a-brac in the shadow of palazzos and fine Art Deco apartments, graze on pastries, pickles and peach ice cream, or 'read' a novel in the form of a museum. Photographs by Jürgen Frank

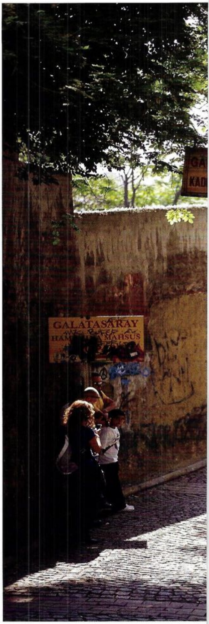


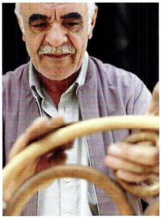


Right Gallic airs in Çukurcuma's Faik Paşa Yokuşu, in the 'hollow' ('çukur') between İstiklal Caddesi and Cihangir
Above left Backstreet backgammon
Left Burcu Denizer, owner of Kiki, the bar on Sıraselviler with the smoothest vodka cocktails



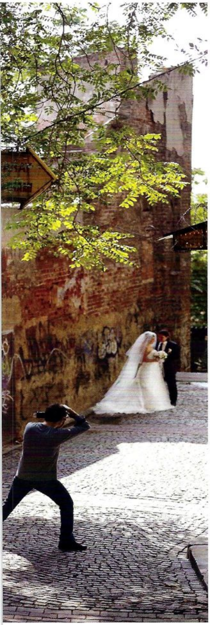
Cihangir charm. **Clockwise from top left:** A street of bay-windowed houses; a wedding pose; Anatolian cupboard doors; a visitor from Jaipur; polishing off a new Thonet chair

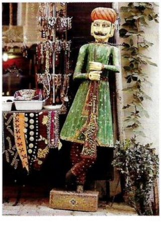




Cihangir is Beyoğlu's answer to Greenwich Village, a neighbourhood with a chequered history and a bohemian air. One 16th-century Ottoman document refers to it as a place of "unsavoury" men and women – and from the 1930s until well after the Second World War it was mildly infamous for its houses of ill repute.

At the same time, it is one of the most attractive districts of the city, minutes from Taksim Square, with Art Deco and early Republican apartment blocks jostling for position to grab a panoramic view of the Bosphorus all the way to Seraglio Point. It is more residential than neighbouring İstiklâl Caddesi and was home to many of the city's non-Muslim minorities. Its liberal, cosmopolitan atmosphere attracted foreigners – the single schoolteacher or author rather than well-heeled businessmen, who headed for homes in compounds way up the Bosphorus. The Çelik Palas (Steel Palace) – an early steel-framed Deco building on Susam Sokağı (Sesame Street!) – was home to George Bean, author of respected guides to the ancient coastal cities, as well as to Dimitri Nesteroff, an aristocratic White Russian fired from Reuters in the 1960s for refusing to cover football matches. The Byzantinist Cyril Mango and his author-journalist brother Andrew grew up around the corner on Arslan Yatağı Caddesi (Lion's Lair Street) at Jones Apartments.





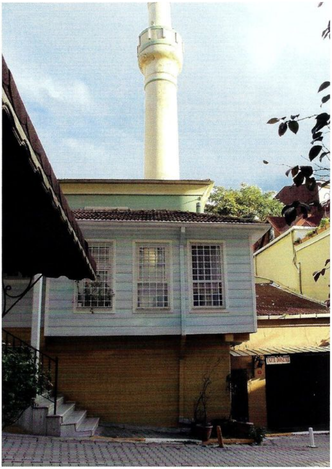
Things ancient and modern

Eccentricity is a valuable commodity in Istanbul, and Cihangir is no longer the bargain it was. The good news is that the neighbourhood sports an array of speciality shops, from wine merchants to health-food stores and really excellent patisseries, all catering to a boho elite. There are cafés and pizzerias and up-market restaurants. The bad news is that it takes some ingenuity to find a loaf of bread to buy.

Colourful cafés have blossomed like self-seeding flowers under swags of vine in Cihangir – the madness of Taksim kept at bay by Sıraselviler, a gloomy avenue with pavements only wide enough for one. An equally awkward lane beside the Galatasaray Lycée, Turnacıbaşı Caddesi, leads to Cihangir from İstiklâl Caddesi via Çukurcuma, a warren of streets where one easily becomes lost. Hardly more welcoming are the stairs to sea level, treacherous in winter.

Cihangir, a son of Süleyman the Magnificent, was a hunchbacked poet who died of grief after his brother Şehzade Mehmed's early death. In 1559 Sinan built a wooden mosque for him, with 100 steps carved out of the rock. Having burned down five times, the **Cihangir Mosque** was finally rebuilt in stone in 1889 in the palatial ballroom manner of Sarkis Balyan. It has curious cloud murals and fabulous views from its terrace.

Colourful names hint at the quarter's past. Prince Cihangir's



mosque is in Pürtelaş Hasan Efendi Mahallesi (Hasan in a Terrible Rush District). Tavuk Uçmaz Sokağı (Hens Won't Fly Street), the steep road to the Kabataş ferries, starts in Sormagir (Don't Ask, Enter); alas the last two have been renamed.

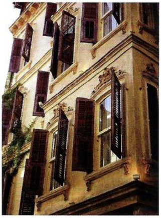
Luxury apartments took control of the bluffs in the 1930s boom. But before the First World War, Vita Sackville-West had her very first garden in Cihangir, after joining her diplomat husband, Harold Nicolson, there (see CORNUCOPIA 21). In a poem about it she writes: "Of broken wells and fountains / There were half a dozen or more, / And, beyond the sea, the mountains / Of that far Bithynian shore." Her old wooden house, with its "wilderness garden", has gone, as have all the others. A Turkish teacher who owned one of the last would offer the builders tea through the hole in the kitchen wall they had made when pulling down the neighbours' house. Also gone are Ege (Aegean) and Cennet (Paradise), famous terraced tea gardens overlooking the Bosphorus.

White Russians liked Cihangir. On the next hill along is the last of their many restaurants, the **Ayaspaşa Rus Lokantası** in Gümüşsuyu (İnönü Cad 77). A bottle of lemon vodka still lands on the table with the bread and water in the basement establishment.

The hub of Cihangir is the brightly painted **Firuz Ağa Mosque**, on the corner of Sıraselviler and Akarsu Caddesi, where the **Cihangir Tea Garden** is packed from midday to midnight, serving glasses of gut-cleansing tea – desirable only if, like the New York food writer Anya von Bremzen, you fancy a mid-morning *lahmacun*, which she flatteringly describes as "a pliant, smoke-tinged oval of dough topped with a faintly spicy smear of ground meat, sprinkled with lemon juice, and rolled around parsley sprigs and tomato slices".

In the back streets a happy mix of nonconformity and respectability lives on: expats, spinsters and scribblers share newly dusted-down buildings behind pink, yellow and pale green façades – which made it all the more incongruous, in the summer of 2013, when night after night riot police rampaged through its streets like the Janissaries of old.

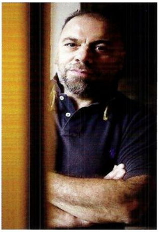
ABOVE ÇUKURCUMA MOSQUE
BELOW THE STYLISH HOUSE HOTEL GALATASARAY
RIGHT ERKAL AKSOY, OWNER OF A LA TURCA, A TREASURE TROVE ON FAIK PAŞA YOKUŞU
BELOW RIGHT AND OPPOSITE TABLES ARE STACKED WITH AN ARRAY OF ITEMS, FROM BUSTS TO GLOBES. AKSOY HAS KEPT THE HANDSOME IRON SHUTTERS

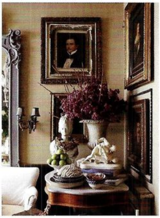


The remains of the day

Between Cihangir and İstiklâl, Çukurcuma is the antiques and bric-a-brac district. The narrow lanes that hem it in are crowded with some of Beyoğlu's grandest palazzos, two of which – The House and the Corinne – are now chic hotels. One of the most strikingly done-up houses is Erkal Aksoy's Aladdin's cave of an antique shop, **A La Turca**, though you would not guess it from outside. This is at the top of Faik Paşa Yokuşu, a street named after a rags-to-riches Italian orphan, Francesco Della Sudda, who rose to be the Empire's chief pharmacist after the Crimean War. A three-storey house round the corner from the Greek Consulate and the Tarihi Ağa Hamamı – as venerable as the word *tarihi* (historic) in its name suggest – it began as a place for kilims, but is filled to its elegant rafters with everything to delight the eye and wit, from threshing rakes to oil paintings and a basement full of Anatolian glazed jars. The house is on the servants' side of the street, looking out onto the curving row of palazzos belonging to their masters. Stock comes and goes so fast you can visit weekly and find new things. Faik Paşa has also now attracted some of the best interior designers and designer shops.

A little way down the hill you pass shops such as **Serdar Ögecan** (No 33), crammed with gilded 18th- and 19th-century French furniture – big mirrors, showy chairs, glass cabinets for porcelain statuettes, 12-foot marble urns… Turn left into the picturesque square with the





charming wooden mosque, originally by Sinan, that gave Çukurcuma its name. On the corner, at Çukurcuma Caddesi 58, **Aslı Günşiray** sells elegant Belgian wall sconces and European and Ottoman antiques.

Two doors along, in the less polished **Tombak Antika** (Çukurcuma Camii Sok 7A) the friendly Naciye Sepet stocks old cast-iron radiators, gas lamps, costumes, masks, scent bottles – all heaped on top of each other. The place has the feel of a grand private attic and prices are reasonable. Next door at No 7B, **Abdullah** has big crystal mirrors, the odd palatial marble fireplace and often pretty blue-and-white porcelain. The street outside is a veritable salvage yard, thanks to **Taşçı Halil's** hoard of *kurna* (hamam basins) and fountains rescued from doomed old houses (No 9).

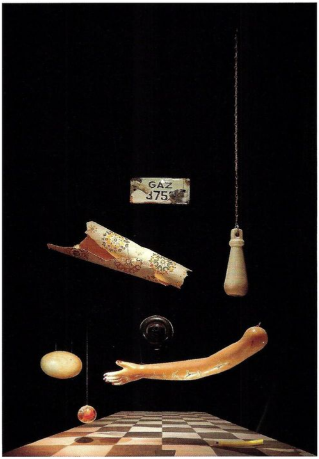
Back on Çukurcuma Caddesi, at No 49, by the 18th-century ablution fountain, **Sıfır** (Zero) has a varnished Native American canoe hanging from the ceiling. It stocks mainly ironware, but Sadettin Davran and Selçuk Aslan also collect old hand tools, door numbers and other curiosities, and in an adjoining workshop, industrial lamps, stands and shelves are welded, burnished and bashed into the design of your choice as you sip tea under the vine or cool your feet in the mosque's ablution basins.

Farther down the street are numerous other small shops which change hands frequently. Opposite, the old wrought-iron garden chairs are robust, statuesque tables sculpted to order from recycled timber. Rather heartbreaking, though, is the sight of carved ceilings, wooden columns, fireplace surrounds, even painted mosque pulpits, not only from Anatolia but from all over the Balkans and Central Asia. You might well spot an imperial Ottoman coat of arms on an old pianola.

For the most part Çukurcuma is full of bric-a-brac and salvage brought in by barrow men trawling the old quarters now being swept away.

There is creative new stuff as well as old. Up on Ağa Hamamı Sokağı, at No 11, **Amorf** make

INNOCENCE FOUNDATION AND REFİK ANADOL



INNOCENCE FOUNDATION AND REFİK ANADOL

THIS PAGE AND RIGHT ORHAN PAMUK'S MUSEUM OF INNOCENCE OPPOSITE, FROM TOP SIFIR SHOWS ITS METAL; ÇUKURCUMA'S SQUARE; THE NEW, COOL GREY CORINNE HOTEL ON TURNACIBAŞI CADDESİ

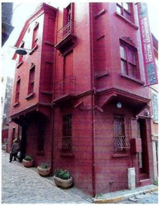
Love in a thousand pieces

A vitrine bears the label "The Happiest Moment of My Life". Inside, a butterfly earring is lit like a holy relic. We are in Çukurcuma, contemplating an exhibit in the first museum in the world to be inspired by a novel: Orhan Pamuk's *The Museum of Innocence*.

In truth, this is not a museum at all, but an infinitely elaborate installation, a carefully constructed whole, an ambitious piece of conceptual art that peeks into the jumble of the human psyche – albeit with the add-on of a gift shop that sells posters and fridge magnets. It is also an act of remembering, an evocation of Istanbul's fading bourgeoisie in the last quarter of the 20th century. When Pamuk first conceived the novel, it was to take the form of a catalogue that would relate, object by object, the story of a doomed, obsessive love. The inventory was to include trophies that the well-to-do Kemal had filched from his shop-girl lover, Füsun, such as that earring in case No 1. The eventual book took on a different form, but the museum is true to the original conceit. In each of a series of display cases is a meticulously arranged still life, designed to provoke the same responses as the novel's 83 "chapters".

Pamuk collected many of the items from local flea markets, though others are sly manufactures, such as a yellowing newspaper ad for Turkey's first fruit-flavoured fizzy drink, which exists only in the writer's imagination.

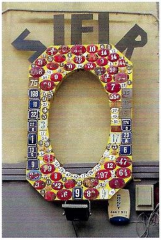
He insists that the novel and museum operate on planes independently of one another. "If you know the book, there is a pleasant excitement of recognition. But then the enthusiasm vanishes and a deeper thing starts." The idea was to develop a "similar aura" around the objects.



BERRIN TOROLSAN

The Museum of Innocence (masumiyetmuzesi.org, open daily 10am–6pm, Fri 10am–9pm, closed Mon) is scattered over three floors with a breathtaking attention to detail, yet there are vantage points where you can pause to take in the ingenuously constructed whole. With it, Pamuk makes an extraordinary leap from the printed page. As to the overall design, it was, says the author, no less complex than building a submarine.

Andrew Finkel



BERRIN TOROLSAN

beautiful olive-wood chopping boards, pestles and mortars, and giant tabletops from walnut trunks. **Leyla Seyhanlı**, round the corner from the Çukurcuma Mosque, at Altıpatlar Sokağı 6, has a huge selection of vintage costumes. **Berrin Akyüz** (Akarsu Cad 22) offers reworked vintage clothes in lush fabrics, bold colours and interesting shapes.

Two Orhans have literary museums. Not everyone is wowed by the implied narcissism of the 5,000 cigarette stubs that touched the author's fictional lover's lips, framed and dated, in Orhan Pamuk's **Museum of Innocence** at the bottom of Çukurcuma Caddesi (No 24) – but it gives Çukurcuma an edge.

Decades before him, at Akarsu Caddesi 30, Orhan Kemal's son opened a museum dedicated to his father, a social-realist novelist born in Adana in 1914. He lived across the Golden Horn behind the Cibali Cigarette Factory, and his memoirs are touching tales of the disadvantaged.

Drink, eat, pay

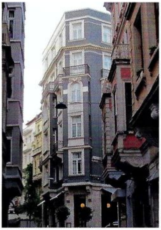
There are lots of places to imbibe in Cihangir. The rested *flâneur* starts with a beer on the terrace of **Otto Cihangir**, down the steps at Sıraselviler 66, then warms up with a mastic-and-*tahin* vodka cocktail chez **Kiki** (No 42), a gastropub with dancing that kicks off its shoes at 11.30 most evenings. Good menus and stupendous views are found at **5. Kat** (Soğancı Sok 7), a fifth-floor restaurant-bar with dancing at weekends. **Münferit** (Yeni Çarşı Cad 19) in Çukurcuma doubles as a modern meyhane, with exotic meze and a small dance floor.

For breakfast try a pastry from **Savoy Pastanesi** (Sıraselviler Cad 181), or a more substantial meal at the **Van Kahvaltı Evi** (Defterdar Yokuşu 52), which is gloomy unless you sit outside; its *kahvaltı tabağı* (breakfast plate) is local farmers' produce only.

The mother of Cihangir's café revolution is an antique shop-turned-café, **Smyrna**, at the end of Akarsu Caddesi (No 29). Cheek by jowl with that is the homely **Journey** (Akarsu Cad 21), with a communal table upstairs and books galore. The menu is Turkish with a strong European twist. Roasted lamb shank is cooked in honey and served with mash. **Savoy Balık** (Bakraç Sok 32) is a good, straightforward fish restaurant.

Locals order thin-crust, wood-fired pizza from **Miss Pizza** (Havyar Sok 7). Comforting puddings and reliable lokanta fare can be found at **Özkonak** (Akarsu Cad 60). For another sweet treat, **Muà Gelatieri** (Firuz Ağa Camii Sok 2), beside the mosque, serves Florentine *gelati*. The friendly Italian owner will let you sample as many as you like – but go for peach. There's traditional gooey Turkish ice cream at **Yaşar Usta,** on Bakraç Sokağı. Opposite the Cihangir tea gardens is **Antre Gourmet** (Akarsu Cad 40), with good charcuterie and cheeses from all over Turkey and Europe.

For pickles, the heavenly **Asri Turşucu** (Ağa Hamamı Sok 9) has all the sour, crunchy and salty cucumbers, cabbage, peppers, garlic, okra, tomato you can dream of, and *şalgam suyu* (pickled turnip juice) to drink. For the health nut: **Ecolife** (Soğancı Sok 8), or **Balya Organik** (Batarya Sok 16).



BERRIN TOROLSAN

Cast of thousands

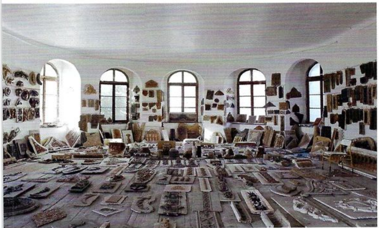
If you follow Faik Paşa Yokuşu down the hill and join Bostanbaşı Caddesi – home to The House Hotel – you end up in the district of Tomtom Kaptan and the long, straight street to Tophane, Boğazkesen Caddesi. Here old Ottoman embassies peep over high walls, and tiny artisan's shops are busy reinventing the kitchen stool and dining table. Some, like **Hamm** (No 71), represent several designers. **Ceren Başgöze** (No 72) and **Hane 78** (No 78) do very much their own thing.

Alternatively, a right turn up Bostanbaşı brings you to the ramparts of the Galatasaray Lycée and more design shops, such as **Stoa** (Harbiye Sok 18), who turn beautiful slabs of wood into angular chairs and tables. On the next street down, **Pêche de Malle** (Yeniçarşı Sok 25) has summery wraps (*peştemal*), piqué bed covers and scarves from Denizli in silk and cotton. Look out for a discreet sign for the **Limonlu Bahçe** (Lemon Garden) at No 98. A nondescript door leads down to a secret leafy garden and café.

Fancy a takeaway palazzo? Visit the plaster-cast man Kemal Cımbız and his son at their workshop in the enormous old French orphanage (Boğazkesen Cad 19). Upstairs, carefully laid out on the floor of large oval rooms, are moulds for Pera's old cornices, capitals and ceiling roses. But be warned: they prefer paying customers to browsers (+90 212 249 8075).

Then sleep it off

For the modernist, **Witt Istanbul Suites** (Defterdar Yokuşu 26) heads the list of places in Cihangir to collapse after all that – and very soothing it is. A newcomer in Çukurcuma is the classical **Corinne**, a successful transformation of a 1920s office block on Turnacıbaşı Caddesi, built by the architect Mimar Kemaleddin. Madame Corinne taught Atatürk his French and her descendants live next door. The hotel is handy for the **Galatasaray Hamam** at the top of the street. An ugly Sixties



Left, above left and top
In the former French orphanage on Boğazkesen Caddesi, Kemal Cimbiz's historic plaster-cast moulds for cornices, ceiling roses and panels, all laid out and ready for use in the workshop downstairs
Above Marble fountains with elaborate backs and hamam basins at Taşçı Halil

entrance conceals splendid 1740s baths (the women's quarters were an afterthought).

For those who like to mix ancient and modern, **The House Hotel** (Bostanbaşı Cad 19) is the chain's first palazzo makeover. The see-through shower in the middle of the bedroom may be disconcerting, but the view from the bar is the same one that de Favray painted in 1773. ◆

ALL HUMAN LIFE IS HERE

This could be the most cosmopolitan place in the world – a rainbow district where skilled craftsmen mingle with well-heeled shoppers and Syrian refugees. Catch it while you can, says Owen Matthews, before Beyoğlu's old-world charm is swept away by rising rents and passing fashions. Photographs by Magnus Bischofberger

FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

The streets of Beyoğlu are a living museum of Istanbul's ages. The cobblers and carpenters and booksellers, the Jewish corset sellers and Russian monks, the pickpockets and even the newly arrived foreigners – all are live echoes of artisans and peoples that have made up the human mosaic of the city for the past millennium. Within a single square mile you can buy a surgical truss from a member of the 1,200-year-old Karaim Jewish community, and a sheep's-head sandwich made to a centuries-old recipe from a now-vanished Greek community in Cappadocia. You can buy a brass ship's bell hand-cast in a foundry that has been in continuous use since the 15th century, then have your shoes polished by a man who has been watching the people of Istanbul pass by from the same street corner for over half a century. Nowhere else in the city – and in few places in the world – have the heirs of so many cultures lived and worked side by side for so long. Certainly, there are cities aplenty where peoples have been tumbled together by the politics and economics of the 20th century. But there are very few where such a cosmopolitan tradition has historical roots as deep as these. Only Antwerp, perhaps, or London's East End with its Huguenots and Jews, or Beirut with its Armenians and Greeks, comes close.

Beyoğlu was where Byzantium met the wider world. It was first recorded in 425AD as the city's suburban 13th district: the local Greeks called it *Peran en Sykais*, literally "the Fig Field on the Other Side" of the Golden Horn – hence Pera, the oldest of the quarter's many names. Foreigners settled here from the 11th century: Jews, then a few enterprising Genoese and Venetians. In the waterside bazaars they traded with pagan blond Scandinavians from wild Russia and Arab merchants from super-civilised Baghdad.

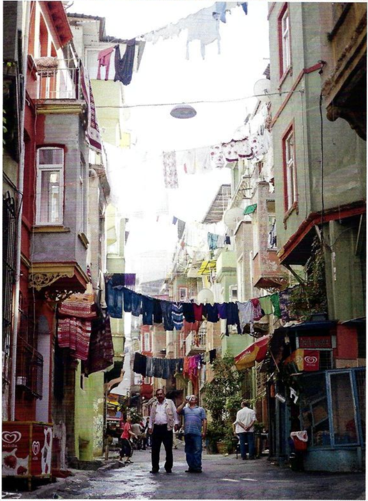
From its beginnings, the place was synonymous with foreignness. The Turks called it Beyoğlu – "son of the lord" – after the Constantinople-born Venetian Alvise Gritti, the illegitimate son of Andrea Gritti, Venetian ambassador to the Ottoman court and a future Doge. Gritti became one of Istanbul's wealthiest bankers and merchants, a trusted agent of Grand Vizier Pargalı Ibrahim Pasha (himself originally a Greek from the Venetian colony of Parga in Epyrus). The medieval Genoese made Galata into a fortified Italian city-state on the shores of the Bosphorus. Later generations of Greeks, Italians, Armenians, Jews, Russians and other assorted foreigners transformed it into a little corner of Central Europe, with its grand Art Nouveau apartment blocks, restaurants, electric lights and tramways. In the twilight years of the Ottoman Empire, Beyoğlu–Pera was simultaneously the heart of the city and not part of the city at all – an Occidental world of progress and technology transported to the Orient. Today, *mutatis mutandis*, it is the place where many modern expatriates live and work, the headquarters of the modern city's bourgeois bohemians and, still, its window on the West.

But it is precisely that engagement with the commercial currents of the globe, and the hot glare of money and the fashion that money follows, that is the greatest threat to the delicate traditions of old Beyoğlu. Disparaging talk of gentrification risks becoming the ultimate in reverse snobbery, implying that continued picturesque poverty is better. But it is an unavoidable truth that most of Beyoğlu's artisans and traditional shopkeepers are poor. They cannot possibly compete with rising rents, hipster cafés and locavore restaurants and designer boutiques. Much of the world described here, and with it the unique soul of Beyoğlu, will soon be swept away.

Already a great chunk of central Beyoğlu has been obliterated – quite literally, torn to the ground. This year a three-block-square section of Tarlabaşı Bulvarı has been razed and a five-storey-deep pit dug in its place. Only the façades of the buildings facing the side streets still stand, propped up from behind with multiple steel braces, like rotten teeth. Inside the fenced-off redevelopment zone two more old façades still stand, evidently deemed historically valuable enough to be granted a radical architectural makeover as part of a new complex of houses or shops that the developers of the Tarlabaşı Renewal Project promise will be "in keeping with the historical character of the area". Beyoğlu's mayor, Ahmet Misbah Demircan, called the area "the most gangrenous" of Tarlabaşı. "If we can solve this part, we think the rest will be solved more easily with new excitement," he promised. In all, 278 properties have been condemned as part of the project – about half have already been torn down, while the rest have been evacuated.

Which is not to say they stand empty. Beyoğlu, in its capacity as Istanbul's gateway, has absorbed a large number of Syrian refugees. Many of them live, unregistered, in the empty houses – the equivalent of Baltimore and Detroit's "vacants". Most of Tarlabaşı is an authentic slum – but even by local standards the Syrians are shockingly poor. The children are dirty-faced and wear disintegrating plastic shoes. On the abandoned Tavla Sokağı the smell of brown coal smoke

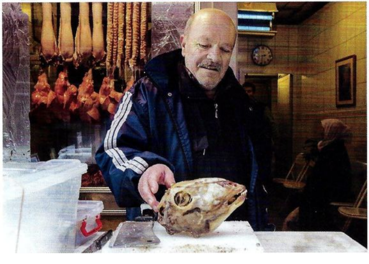
Clockwise from top left Wood-turning; cheerful children; Turkish delight at Üç Yıldız; corsets at Kelebek Korse; chains at a chandler's and a crowded machine-tool workshop in Perşembe Pazarı; washing day in Tarlabaşı
Above left Beyoğlu's trenchant graffiti artists strike again



JÜRGEN FRANK

jöle
36.00 tl/kg.

BRIAN MCKEE



trickles out of makeshift pipes jutting out of the plastic-covered windows. Youths from Aleppo with bruised faces and torn tracksuits stand on the street corners, chatting politely enough with us in broken Turkish while eyeing the photographer's camera. They attempt to be candid about their occupations – the children head out to İstiklâl to beg, Ahmad tells me, while he and his friends pick up work as "porters" and "security guards ... there are a lot of thieves around here". As if on cue, a patrol of red-and-black-clad motorcycle cops turns down Taksim Yağhanesi Sokağı and the young Syrian men dissolve into the abandoned buildings like water down a drain.

Around the giant Tarlabaşı hole and its concentric circle of Syrian-squatted buildings live the respectable, and slightly less respectable, poor of Tarlabaşı proper. On Atlı Ases Sokağı a group of plump, jolly and spectacularly ugly gypsy prostitutes sit chatting and smoking on a doorstep. A younger and more respectable veiled woman who has been chatting with them draws her children aside, embarrassed, as we approach. The ladies of the night cheerily greet passers-by, though it would take a Zola novel to explain how anyone could end up climbing the creaky stairs of their falling-down house with one of them.

Down the street Ayhan Usta polishes metal clasps for fake luxury handbags in a large semi-subterranean atelier thick with aluminium dust and cigarette smoke. Ayhan himself is covered from head to foot in silvery dust: he looks like the Tin Man from *The Wizard of Oz*. He grumbles about the future of the neighbourhood. First the development, then the Syrians, and now the "*Butik Oteller*". He says it with studied contempt, as a well-to-do Bebek matron might say "gypsy encampment".

Indeed the next street, Cevza Sokağı, is full of gaudy, cut-price "boutique hotels", their façades freshly plastered and the steps covered in new-cut marble. These establishments could truly only exist in the age of internet booking – no traveller in their right mind would come here and decide to stay. Instead they are inhabited by innocent bargain-hunting tourists from Düsseldorf and Warsaw who discovered them on the web. They look slightly disconcerted to find themselves in the middle of a class war between indigenous slum-dwellers and poor Syrian squatters. All the locals swear that the area is safe as houses for foreigners – which may be true, but one has to watch one's wallet in the café-and-bar-filled back streets of Asmalımescit.

Across the street from the hotels, Muammer Usta has been turning wooden table legs and candlesticks on a 1950s German-made lathe since 1980. He charges 15 lira a leg. When I ask if this is a sustainable business plan, he laughs and says the rent for his one-room atelier is 600 lira a month. Fair enough. The floor is ankle-deep in wood shavings and cigarette butts, which from time to time get swept into an antique cast-iron stove to keep the place warm. The walls are covered in dusty photographs of football teams and a very stern-looking framed Atatürk. "Beyoğlu has changed a lot since I came here from near the Süleymaniye Mosque 35 years ago," he muses. "A lot more foreigners. And rich people. They'll buy it all one day."

A sure sign of coming gentrification is a profusion of newly opened architectural bureaux and estate agents. A run-down house on a Tarlabaşı street, where residents are mostly poor Kurds, where housewives lower baskets on strings for the grocery boy and hang washing across the street, will set you back at least a quarter of a million euros.

Beyoğlu has also always been synonymous with the pleasures of the flesh. "Who says Galata says taverns – may God forgive us!" wrote a shocked Turkish writer of the 17th century. In 1524, soon after his father's election as Doge, Alvise Gritti threw a dinner for 300 guests in his palace in Galata, which featured venison, peacock and partridge. Guests were entertained by local women dancing "with such lascivious movements that they could make marbles melt", according to the son of the Venetian vice-bailo. Even then the entertainments of Beyoğlu had a cosmopolitan flavour: Gritti's dinner was followed by a comedy – *Cupid and Psyche* – a tournament, and a masque representing the Portuguese conquest of Ceylon.

Today the tradition continues – though not perhaps in quite as high-class a way as Gritti's entertainments. According to the Beyoğlu municipality, a staggering three million people – equivalent to half the population of Ireland – flock to the quarter on Saturdays and Sundays. I can think of no other city in the world where a mile-long street – İstiklâl Caddesi – is entirely lined with side streets filled with restaurants, bars and cafés. The New Orleans French Quarter is pathetic in comparison; even Barcelona's Ramblas does not come close to the sheer volume and assortment of Beyoğlu's nightlife. And even though fashions in food and drink change with the generations, there are still spots in the generic sea of Beyoğlu meyhanes that have deep roots in the quarter.

Consider, for instance, the generations-old offal face-off between **Muammer Usta**, who serves cold, boiled sheep's heads (*söğüş kelle*) on the corner of Balık Sokak, and his close neighbour on the other side of the street, **Senin Ciğerci** (Your Liver Man), who serves hot roasted ones, *kelle tandır*. No contest, one would have thought. But no, in our considered judgement, the cold boiled sheep's cheek with its sprinkling of thyme and red pepper in a fresh white roll is, counter-intuitively, far superior to the rather gristly, greasy, hot Senin Ciğerci offering. Luckily, opinion has remained sufficiently divided for much of the past century to fuel a thriving business for both parties. Sinasi Usta runs the shop opened by his grandfather in 1957. But Muammer Usta has seniority. His great-grandfather got into the boiled-sheep's-head business in 1890, having learnt the recipe from Greek neighbours in his native Cappadocia. Muammer himself took over the stall in 1976 (it boasts a laminated photograph of him as a cheerful teenager in flared trousers on the same street corner). His wife boils up to 60 heads daily (one assumes she knew what she was getting into when she married into the family) in their kitchen at home.

Round the corner is a small clutch of eccentric family businesses. **Madame Katia**, in the Hacopulo Pasajı just by Galatasaray, is Beyoğlu's last bespoke milliner. The formidable Katia Kiracı senior opened the place in 1965 and decorated it in the latest Parisian high-society style: flock wallpaper, gilt mirrors and reproduction Rococo furniture. And so it remains, under the ownership of her daughter and namesake. The extravagant hats on display are samples from which discerning ladies choose different styles and colours for their own made-to-order creations. But on an average day the hipster-packed cappuccino stand and wine bar opposite seem to do much more business.

Kelebek Korse, farther down on İstiklâl, also caters to a dwindling clientele. It is a corset shop, with a window display unabashedly full of surgical trusses, elastic teddies with reinforced gussets and even more alarming pieces of speciality underwear. The proprietor is İlya Avramoğlu, a member of the Karaite sect of Judaism, whose ancestors came to Constantinople in the 800s from Abbasid Baghdad. İlya's grandfather opened the shop in its present location in 1936. His son is a computer expert – there is no heir to take over the strange little shop, lined to the ceiling with shelves stuffed with

Clockwise from top left Yufka pastry at Üc Yildiz; shoemaking at Candemir; handmade hats at Madame Katia's; an ancient lathe; a roasted sheep's head; watch repairs at Kosova Saatçisi and 'Louboutins', Beyoğlu-style cellophane-wrapped underwear.

The **Üç Yıldız** confectionery in the Balık Pazarı, or Fish Market, in Galatasaray is perhaps on firmer commercial ground. It's a traditional confectioner, unique in producing most of its sweets in a small factory directly above the shop. The interior could have been designed for the Harry Potter films – it is the ultimate sweet shop of the imagination, its walls lined with dark wooden shelves stacked with large glass jars full of sweeties and boxes of toffee and chocolate. The white-coated Feridun Dörtler, a figure from central casting, is the fourth generation to run the place: the family have been in business here since 1926. On certain days of the week, boiled sweets and rock candy are cooked up in large stainless-steel vats on the upstairs floor. They also produce their own-brand *lokum* (Turkish delight) and boil their own orange, quince, strawberry and cherry jams, which are sold from 180-year-old Ottoman copper churns and weighed out on an antique manual scale (at TL18 a kilo, a bargain).

At least for the present, the artisans are hanging on, in the back streets of Beyoğlu, even as property values shoot up and the bourgeoisie moves in. **Candemir**, on Sıraselviler, has been producing handmade men's shoes in the back room for 50 years. Necati Usta, the head shoemaker, learned his trade at the Bally factory in Switzerland in 1963. A pair of bespoke shoes will set you back less than a hundred euros.

Round the corner on Hocazade Sokağı is a traditional knife grinder; his terrifying machine with its grinders and polishers is of the owner's own design. With a flourish and a shower of sparks, **Adem Usta** renders a two-foot-long kebab knife deadly sharp. He charges three to five lira a knife.

There are larger, almost industrial concerns too. A factory producing fake Louboutin and Jimmy Choo shoes occupies an entire floor of one of the most handsome, block-long apartment buildings just off İstiklâl. A score of craftsmen, all cheerfully puffing away at cigarettes, work among piles of leather, buckles, lasts and pots of glue. Most of the machinery is antique and caked in the dust and grime of decades: only a room-sized, state-of-the-art laser cutter, which produces the patterns from photos downloaded from the internet, is brand new. Around them, the building is quietly disintegrating. The clapboards that face the brick façades have been tumbling into the street for years; recently the city council erected a special corrugated-iron screen to prevent injuries to pedestrians. The upper floors have long been abandoned to the weather, and the roof is more or less gone. Yet the atelier's owner, Ali Bey, and his neighbours, a retail store that sells his shoes, are sanguine about the future. "The building's owners are waiting to sell," says Ali. "They have been saying that for 20 years."

Nearby, it has finally happened: the giant 1890 Rumeli Han was also until recently home to a motley collection of dive bars, computer-repair shops, bad restaurants and weird little offices before the last tenants were finally evicted last year. The internal passage serving as both courtyard and shopping arcade is largely abandoned, plastered with posters of radical leftist revolutionary groups mourning the martyrs of last summer's Gezi Park uprising. The property stretches all the way from İstiklâl to the street behind and has seven storeys: it must be worth hundreds of millions. Locals fear it will suffer the same fate as the nearby Demirören shopping mall, on the corner of Yeşilçam Sokağı. The original 1892 building was knocked down three years ago and replaced by a crude pastiche three storeys higher; it now houses chain stores such as Gap and Guess.

The gleaming marble and bright shop windows of Demirören make a strange contrast to the humble **Havai Lostra** on Ağa Cami Sokağı. It's a shoe-shine shop, devoted solely to cleaning the footwear of customers who perch on four elevated red-leather-covered stools. The interior is lined with mirrors and battered brass, and the five blue-coated employees are kept entertained by a 1950s radio perched on a special shelf. The shop was opened by the father of the current owner, Seher Örenler, in 1951; on a good day they will shine 40 pairs of shoes at 5 lira a pop.

Humbler still is **Halis Efendi**, a street shoe-shiner who has been working on the same block near Galatasaray for 53 years. Born in 1930, Halis served as a policeman in Sivas and had a wife and five children, but fell out with them, moved to Istanbul and took up his shoe-shining trade. He has watched the life of Beyoğlu passing him by from his little wicker stool ever since. Many of his customers are also friends who stop for a chat and a glass of tea from the local tea stand. On the morning of November 20, 2003 Halis shined the shoes of one of his favourite regulars, the British consul general Roger Short. An hour later Halis went round the corner for tea: it saved his life. An al-Qaeda suicide truck bomb demolished the gatehouse of the consulate where Short was working, killing him and 29 others. Halis still keeps a tattered photograph of Short in his wallet.

Upper Beyoğlu is changing fast as tourists, shoppers and wealthy outsiders move in en masse. At the foot of the Galata hill, the Perşembe Pazarı district still moves to a more proletarian rhythm. This is the place where the history of the city comes closest to the surface. Perşembe Pazarı is still full of chandlers, metalworkers and small industrial ateliers producing everything from high-tech machine parts to brass fittings.

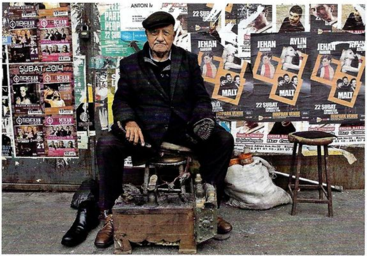
The late-19th-century **Nimetiye Han** is filled with the eerie screeching noises of grinding metal. Bektaş Usta has been working in the building for 40 years, man and boy, since he was at primary school. He makes copies of steel machine parts on a series of 1950s vintage lathes. His best customer of late has been Marmaray, the $2.5 billion project that links Istanbul's European and Asian metro systems via 13 kilometres of new tunnels. The building's foundations are medieval Genoese; its products are an integral part of the city's newest engineering project.

The **Dökümcüler Han** dates from the end of the Byzantine period and was the medieval equivalent of an industrial-estate-cum-shopping-mall, where artisans and traders had workshops, warehouses and retail shops. Today the entrance is blackened with soot from a working brass and iron foundry that is fired up three times a week. You can feel a throb of heat on your face as you pass the rows of moulds cooling in the courtyard. The upper floors have been abandoned to vegetation and a small army of cats; the view from the roof over the domes of Sultanahmet and up the hill to Galata is glorious. The deserted medieval spaces have the unreal air of a computer game – in the dust are strewn long-handled ladles, broken vases stamped "Venedig" (Venice was part of the Austrian empire for much of the 19th century), broken workbenches and broken glass.

On the still-bustling ground floor the workmen draw their water from a tap set into a cast-iron hand-pump which is in turn plumbed into a medieval wellhead made from an upturned late-classical marble column. The Rüstem Pasha Han next door has a similar arrangement. Seamlessly, a fixture from a Byzantine palace becomes a working 21st-century washbasin. There could be no more eloquent symbol of the living, unselfconscious palimpsest of ages past that is Beyoğlu. ◆

Owen Matthews is the author of 'Glorious Misadventures: Nikolai Rezanov and the Dream of a Russian America' (Bloomsbury)

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT HALİS EFENDİ, SHINING SHOES FOR 53 YEARS; A HOMAGE TO ATATÜRK; SHEEP'S HEADS BOILED TO A 100-YEAR-OLD RECIPE; A LEAFY CORNER; A BRASS FOUNDRY; MARBLE WEIGHTS USED BY LEATHER-CUTTERS; MOBILE KÖFTE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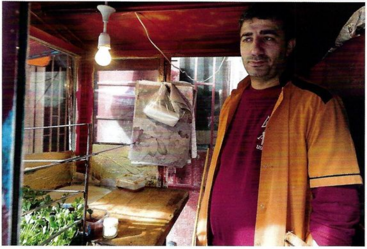

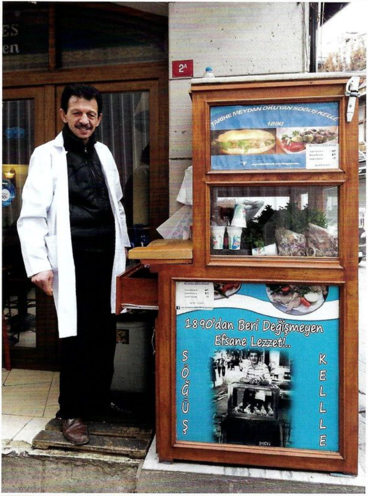
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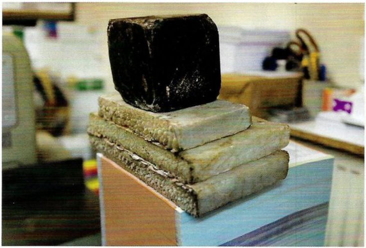


The Galata Docklands

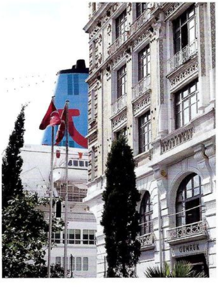
UNTIL THE WRECKING BALL SWINGS

East meets West. Tradition meets fashion. And historic buildings meet their doom in Karaköy, as developers follow the foodies, fun seekers and art lovers to this ever more sought-after area below the Galata Tower

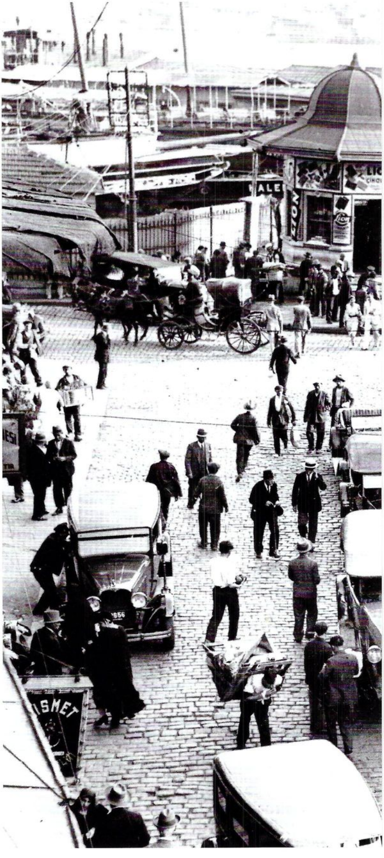
Galata, today's Karaköy, is the Istanbul cliché, the place where East meets West, a transport hub of colour and confusion. John Freely and Hilary Sumner-Boyd's classic 1972 guide *Strolling Through Istanbul* begins its pilgrimage here, at the entrance to the bridge across the Golden Horn. The splendour and skyline of the Ottoman city are straight ahead; behind are the mighty 19th-century finance houses. Karaköy is where commuters from Asia land by boat, where tourists on commercial liners set foot ashore, and where the famous underground cable car, the Tünel, makes its Sisyphean journey up the hill to Beyoğlu and down again. But what was once a transit point is now a destination in itself. Apart from such sights as the 14th-century Arap Camii, a Gothic-church-turned-mosque, at one end, and the Kılıç Ali Pasha Mosque at the other, it has become a gastronomic centre where new Aegean cuisine has joined the traditional good fish, well-grilled meatballs and buttery baklava.

Hotels are proliferating, because Karaköy is so incredibly convenient – close to but more alive than the tourist district of Sultanahmet and an easy tram or boat ride to other parts of the city. It has become Istanbul's new art-gallery district and the site of a variety of unusual art spaces – a converted tobacco warehouse, the former Ottoman Bank, two giant maritime warehouses, and an imperial foundry.

Of course all this vitality has attracted Istanbul's predatory property tycoons, intent on redeveloping the area. The heart of the city is about to be ripped out by the wrecking ball to be replaced with anodyne charm.



FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG



Right The Galata Bridge and Karaköy Square, filled with commuters in the 1930s
Left A cruise ship looms over the splendid Customs House, which may become one of the few waterside buildings to survive redevelopment

YAPI KREDI SELAHATTIN GIZ COLLECTION

FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

Looking over the rooftops of Karaköy from the terrace of the Georges Hotel. The Topkapi is on the skyline. In the foreground is the Levantine quarter that grew up on the medieval Genoese city of Galata in the 18th and 19th centuries. On the shore are the newly fashionable Karaköy docks

Upper Galata

LET'S TAKE IT FROM THE TOP

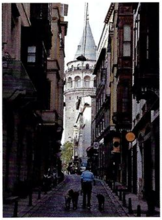
The narrow streets around the **Galata Tower**, with their occasional vistas of the Old City across the Golden Horn, are where the cosmopolitan European venturers known as "Levant merchants" always lived, first in wooden mansions, then in grand 19th-century apartments. These tall blocks still lean in across the streets leading down to the great Levantine trading post of Galata on the shore, where they made their fortunes.

We begin our walk at **Kuledibi** (Tower Foot), the small square skirting the Galata Tower – a five-minute walk from Şişhane or Tünel stations. From the high point of the medieval Genoese city, we make our way down to the waterfront of today's Karaköy, the old Galata docklands, which stretches from the Perşembe Pazarı hardware district on the Golden Horn, with its dilapidated stately old hans, past the Galata Bridge, all the way to Tophane, with its monumental Ottoman cannon foundry.

Dip your toe as far back in time as you would like to, but try to make it on a weekday, when Karaköy – or Galata, call it what you will – is at its bustling best. You should be able to do this walk in a couple of hours, allowing for stops.

Before setting out from this Italian enclave, fortify yourself with an espresso at **Lavazza** on the square, and watch the quarter wake up. Early on, you will only see schoolchildren, the local dog-walker with his nine charges, and the scrap-iron men with their flatbed handcarts. A little later, as the tourists eat a leisurely breakfast, the street vendor on the corner fires up his oven for *kokoreç*, a delicacy of skewered lamb offal wrapped in intestine.

As you leave the square, admire the pretty **Bereketzade Fountain**, which was moved up the hill from the mosque of the same name. It has bowls of pears and peaches in low relief from 1732, like those in Ahmed III's Fruit Room in the Topkapı.



FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

KARAKÖY
ANKARA
MILAN

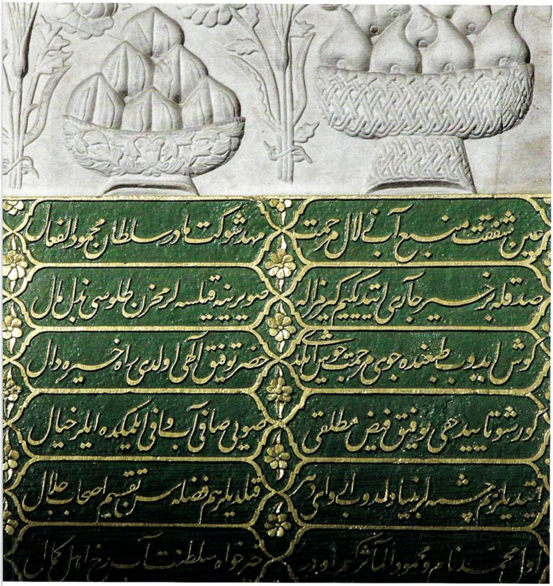
JÜRGEN FRANK

A ditch in time

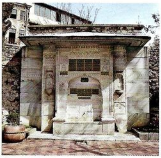
Street names here give enormous historical satisfaction, whether it is Karantina Sokağı (Quarantine Street) down by the docks, or the "*hendeks*" (ditches) around the Galata Tower. Büyük Hendek, the Big Ditch, goes to Şişhane, with Küçük Hendek, the Little Ditch, parallel to it. Lüleci Hendek (Pipe-bowl-maker's Ditch) goes the other way, down to Tophane.

These defensive ditches follow the lines of the old Galata walls, built by the Genoese in the 14th century, and lost in the 19th, their demise marked by İlk Belediye Caddesi (First Municipality Street). Beyoğlu, the city's first municipality, was formed in 1857 and, inspired by Paris's richest *arrondissement*, the *sixième*, called itself the Sixth Municipal Department (Şeş Daire-i Belediye, hence Şişhane, its town hall). Its first act was to pull down as many of the old city walls as possible, leaving the tower in stately isolation.

Some remnants do survive. Behind the Galata Tower is an alley, Kule Çıkmazı (Tower Close), with an iron gate ahead. On weekdays the man sitting outside will usually let you into a courtyard, once a car workshop, to admire a defence tower invisible from the street.



FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG



BRIAN MCKEE

ABOVE THE 1732 BEREKETZADE FOUNTAIN IN THE SQUARE BELOW THE TOWER, AND A DETAIL (TOP) OPPOSITE DOG-WALKING NEAR THE GALATA TOWER (TOP); TURN LEFT FOR KARAKÖY (BELOW) RIGHT THE ART NOUVEAU LÂLELİ FOUNTAIN NEARBY GLOWS PURPLE

All the way to the banks

Before heading downhill, take the time to survey the scene from above. In this steep district, sight lines are key: the **Galata Tower** balcony (open daily 9am–7pm but be prepared to queue) will show you many things you cannot see at street level; and the roof of the **Konak Pastanesi** on Hacı Ali Sokağı – which is good for breakfast or tea – affords the best view of the tower itself, and the delightfully incongruous 1903 Arts and Crafts **British Seamen's Hospital**.

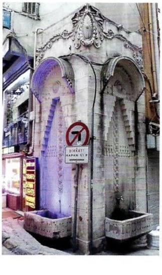
You can take any of the roads down to Bankalar Caddesi, Galata's main artery, and be rewarded with unexpected sights and fragments of history. The most direct is Yüksek Kaldırım (once flights of steps). More fun is Galatakulesi Sokağı, past **Galata House** (No 15), a former British lock-up, now a Georgian restaurant – the owner plays sad Crimean tunes on her piano. On the right are the print gallery **Alba** (No 24) and the **Church of Sts Peter and Paul**.

For a more circuitous route, follow Büyük Hendek as far as the large Sephardic synagogue, **Neve Şalom**, and turn left into Şair Ziya Paşa Caddesi, a street of lighting and cable shops. Art Nouveau aficionados will love chancing upon the **Modern Palas**, looking anything but, with its wrought-iron balconies and façade of ripple motifs. But this is just a teaser for the **Lâleli Çeşme** (Tulip Fountain), built in 1904, probably by Raimondo D'Aronco, which adorns a tight corner farther down. Its new steel tap is in regular use by delivery men, while the nearby lighting shop bathes its Art Nouveau angles in red, purple and green. Could the authorities not have found another spot to plant their "No left turn" sign?

On the same side of the street, at No 13, the independent theatre **D22** sits above the city's last matzo oven, the **Hamursuz Fırın** – until three years ago, unleavened crackers were made in what looks like an enormous lime-green printing press. Across the courtyard is Galata's last kosher butcher (the city still has 11), where *sucuk* (spicy sausage) is hung to dry in the sun. Next door is the **Italian Synagogue**, built in Gothic style in 1885.

Just below the fountain, turn left into an alleyway to find another small Genoese defence tower, marooned in wasteland so far spared from a fate as a parking lot. A helpful plaque gives its address as No 1. This tower is at the back of the church of Sts Peter and Paul, and is set into the western wall of the **Saint Pierre Han** (page 63).

From now on, you are in the former financial district of Bankalar Caddesi, poised to discover Karaköy before its character is effaced.

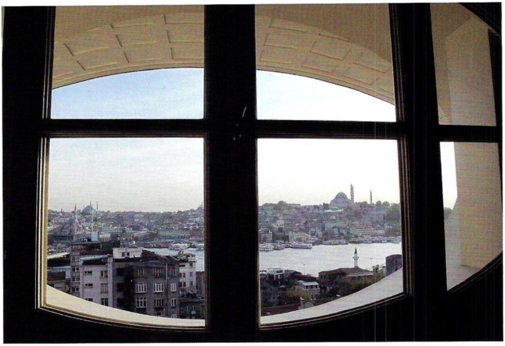


BRIAN MCKEE

Lower Galata

MOVING ASSETS

In Bankalar Caddesi, culture is chasing out the money men

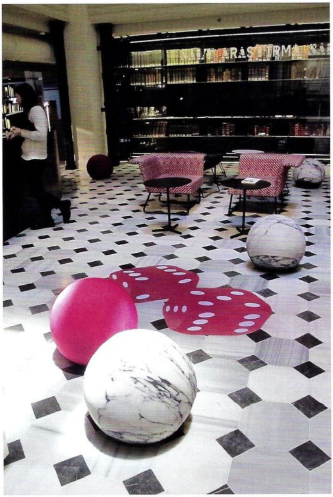

JOHN SCOTT

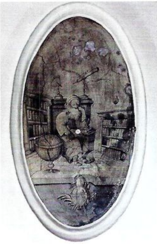
Bankalar Caddesi, in the old financial heart of Ottoman Galata, still has several working banks, but conversions are starting to take place. It is a dark one-way street with imposing but grimy façades encrusted in a hotchpotch of styles from Neoclassical to arabesque. As so often in Istanbul's European City, behind the shabbiness is a satisfying mix of the sublime, the designer and the workaday.

Cutting diagonally across the hill of Galata, Bankalar Caddesi – often shown on old maps as Voyvoda Caddesi – leads in easy stages via Okçu Musa Caddesi all the way from Karaköy Square, with its trams and ferry stops, to the hilltop square of Şişhane, with its metro and Golden Horn view, where Beyoğlu proper begins. Into the 1980s, when new financial districts sprang up, bankers were still making the short walk down to the quays to catch a ferry home, picking up a packet of meze on the way to enjoy with their evening rakı.

With relatively little traffic, the lower half is a good place to start exploring the old Galata docklands. To get your bearings, make for **SALT Galata** at No 11, an arts centre in the intelligently converted Ottoman Bank. The bank moved here in 1892. The

BERRIN TOROLSAN

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This page The Ottoman Bank, now the SALT Galata arts centre, just above Karaköy: the view over the Golden Horn to the Grand Bazaar (top); a library and seats in the form of billiard balls in the old banking hall (left); the marble staircase (far left)
Above Galileo on a ceiling in the Serpuş Han, now workshops
Opposite Karaköy landmarks: from top, the Camondo Steps, built by the Sultan's bankers; the exterior and interior of the Arap Camii, once a Genoese church; the Karaköy quay being recobbled in 2014, with ferries alongside

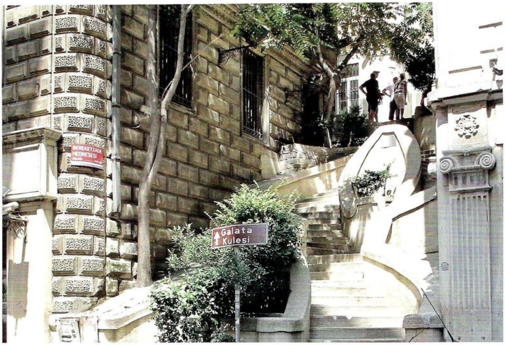
French Levantine architect Alexandre Vallaury created a Neoclassical façade on the street side and a faintly Oriental whimsy of hanging pavilions overlooking the Golden Horn. In the basement is the **Ottoman Bank Museum**, where witty use is made of the old vaults; in some you can even see the fascinating personal details of past customers.

While waiting for the museum to open (its hours are 12–8pm), have a coffee on the ground floor, which has a good art library and fine views across the Perşembe Pazarı markets to the Old City. Upstairs is the swish **Ca' d'Oro** restaurant.

As an art space SALT Galata sets out to challenge visitors with its poster and video installations. The signposting is confusing, but don't miss the top-floor exhibition space, if only for a glimpse of the Old City through oval attic windows and a photogenic view of the Camondo Steps ascending from the street below.

Another building to enjoy a terrific makeover is the old Sümerbank (Bankalar Cad 5), just above the square – the new **Vault Karaköy Hotel**, the latest addition to the House Hotel chain, is a good place to drop in for a touch of designer elegance.

Art and artful hotels may be moving in, but the area's real day job is lighting. You can find anything from needle-sharp gallery spotlights to chandeliers and cast-iron Hamidian garden lamp posts. The higher you go, the more vibrant the shops are.



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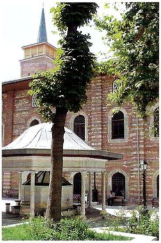

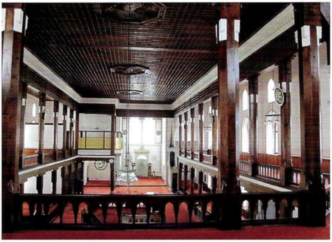

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Perşembe Pazarı: nuts and boltholes

As far back as Byzantine days, the Levant merchants – and later their Ottoman trading partners – made their money in the sheltered area between Bankalar Caddesi and the shore of the Golden Horn. They built sturdy stone-and-brick hans with courtyards, arcades and vaulted chambers that acted as warehouses and workshops. Some, such as the **Kurşunlu Han**, an eight-domed caravanserai built for the grand vizier Rüstem Pasha in the 1540s, survive still, dramatically unrestored, in the rough-and-tumble hardware district of Perşembe Pazarı.

Perşembe Pazarı Caddesi, the second street on the left above SALT Galata, offers a vivid portrait of a way of life and work that is unlikely to last long. The **Serpuş** (Headgear) **Han**, which looks medieval but may be 18th-century, has its entrance down a side street called Eski Tay Çıkmazı (Old Pony Close). Upstairs in the vaulted rooms craftsmen fashion pipes, springs and other hardware essentials in a cacophony of hammering. The *usta* (master) will nonchalantly point to the painting of Galileo – of very uncertain date and

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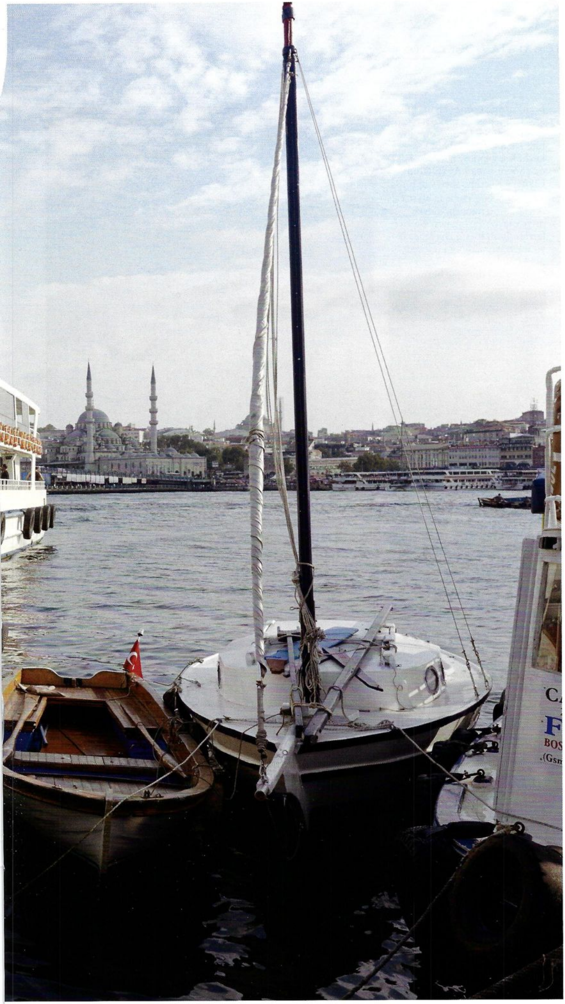

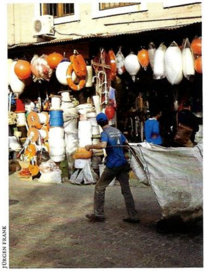

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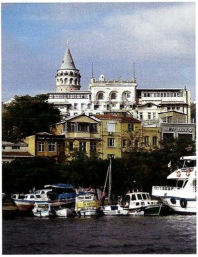

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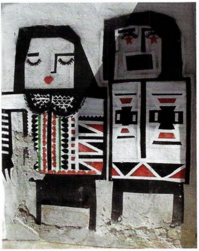


JOHN SCOTT

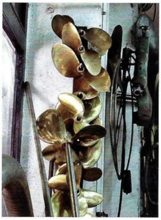
JÜRGEN FRANK

Left A mussel-fishing boat receives attention in front of the chandlers' shops of Perşembe Pazari, on the Golden Horn
Above, from top Ropes, buoys and other boating paraphernalia; the Galata Tower and the Ottoman Bank (now Salt Galata) loom over the shore; lifesize graffiti in the back streets

clearly painted over several times – on the ceiling.

Take the next right on Perşembe Pazarı Caddesi to find the **Arap Camii** (Arab Mosque), originally the largest Genoese church in the city, built between 1325 and 1337 and used as a mosque since 1453. A plaque outside explains its name: it stands on the site of a prayer hall built by Arabs in 715. Scholars have yet to see the Arap Camii's great treasure, its medieval mosaics and frescoes (contemporary with those in the Church of the Chora). Briefly uncovered during restoration, they were quickly plastered over.

On either side of **Tersane** (Shipyard) **Caddesi**, the congested main road between the Galata and Atatürk Bridges, you'll find the chandlers who keep the city afloat – the brass-burnishers and suppliers of rope, steering tackle and paints. Walking on from the mosque, away from Karaköy Square, you come upon the old Armenian craftsman **Ari Melkon Kebabçı** (Sarı Zeybek Sok 36), who has been casting bronze all his life and will repair or make replicas of any antique fitting you show him – latches, doorknobs, keyholes, window handles. His neighbour **İsmail Ay** (Eflatun Çıkmazı 6) crafts sheets of brass – his propellers come in all sizes, the largest strong enough to drive one of the big new tourist ferries. Both love a challenge if you need something knocked up. **Halil İncir** (Arap Camii Çıkmazı 16) does the burnishing.



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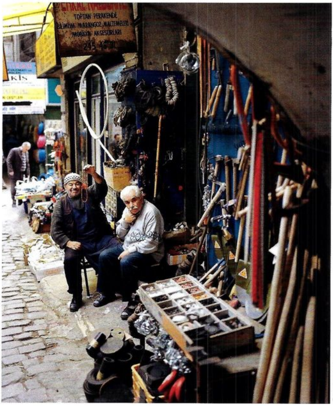

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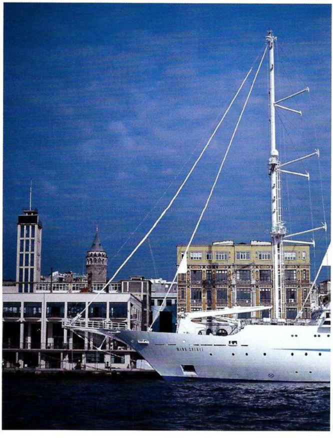


JÜRGEN FRANK

Bits of history lurk: the **Azapkapı Fountain** at the foot of the Atatürk Bridge is a Tulip Age beauty. Next to it is Sinan's 1578 **Sokullu Mehmed Pasha Mosque** (not to be confused with the tiled mosque in the Old City built for the grand vizier's wife). Behind the Tünel station, the **Bereketzade Medrese Mosque**, in the shadow of the old Ottoman Bank, has been much changed but dates from 1702. Opposite is the 19th-century **Eski Posta Han**, home to the Happy People Project ad agency, whose staff fill

This page, clockwise from top left Gleaming brass propellers; a street in Perşembe Pazarı; a quiet spot where it meets the Golden Horn; a yacht next to the threatened 1937 Karaköy passenger lounge
Opposite Unexpected art: a 1965 golden mosaic inside the butcher's Özlem Et, and a frieze above the shops on Karaköy's square, both by Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu

the air with hurried cigarette smoke. Shops continue below Karaköy square – a labyrinth of garden tools and electronica – as far as the gun shops of Tophane.

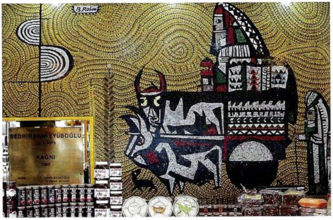
To find all this, not in a soulless hypermarket on some dreary ring road, but in the beating heart of the city, is what makes Istanbul special. Equally special is the sense of stepping across time, which you never find in a mothballed museum of a town. In Tersane Caddesi, for instance, wheelbarrow wheels in 24 sizes hang picturesquely on the walls of the **Fatih Han**, built by Mehmed the Conqueror to pay for the upkeep of Ayasofya.

Bazaar bites

In the streets lining the Golden Horn waterfront, lunch options range from a no-frills mackerel sandwich eaten as the water licks your feet, to simple but fresh fish dishes at the **Tarihi Karaköy Balık Lokantası** (Kardeşim Sok 45, lunch only, Mon–Sat) at the gate to the Ottoman Kurşunlu Han. *Levrek* (sea bass) *en papillote* is a speciality but the skewers are also good. At the more homely **Mutfak Dili** (Ziyalı Sok 10, weekdays 8.30am–6pm), owned by an Armenian couple, soups and stews are cooked by the wife and served in a room lined with photographs of customers.

Perşembe Pazarı becomes a no-man's-land at night with a clatter of falling shutters, but even here, nightlife is making inroads. For a quiet drink at sunset, retreat to the trees at the Galata Bridge end of the waterside park, behind the fish market, where there is a cluster of old-fashioned meyhanes. If you decide to stay to eat, they remain open past midnight.

The waiters of the Karaköy Balık Lokontası smarten up and move upstairs to the **Grifin**, on the top floor of the Grifin Han, in the evening and at Sunday lunchtime, with meze and rakı now on the menu – a pricey affair, but worth it for the view (book ahead: +90 212 243 4080). One floor down is the **Ali Ocakbaşı**, a modern take on the traditional grill (+90 212 293 1011).



BRIAN MCKEE

Karaköy docks

ALL CHANGE AT THE PORT

CATCH IT WHILE YOU CAN

If those who love old Istanbul think things are worrying now, they can take cold comfort from the fact they were just as heartbreaking in the 1950s, when Prime Minister Adnan Menderes bulldozed his way round the Old City, destroying the Sea Walls and many of its oldest quarters. Crossing the Galata Bridge, he made mincemeat of Karaköy's square, hence its unprepossessing look today. Now the threat is to the seafront itself, with its spectacular late-19th- and early-20th-century buildings.

Unlike Perşembe Pazarı, which is a busy, crowded old bazaar, akin to the main bazaars across the Golden Horn, the 19th-century area downstream of the Galata Bridge is altogether less frenetic and more orderly. Here, on the Bosphorus, are the docks built for Abdülhamid II by Michel Pasha (Marius Michel) in 1895. Around them are all the office buildings connected with shipping agents, customs and passenger traffic.

In a seriously misconceived government-backed scheme known as Galataport, much of the familiar seafront is earmarked for demolition, including the French-style post office with its magnificent roof – which would make a wonderful luxury hotel – and the Art Deco cruise-ship passenger lounge (Yolcu Salonu).

Food is the main reason to linger in Karaköy. But culture can detain you, too.

We continue our walk in the square itself, where a motley row of shops is the unlikely setting for two important works of art from the 1960s by Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu, the finest artist of his day: a ceramic frieze above the shops, and 'Kağnı' (The Ox Cart), a dazzling gold mosaic inside the butchers **Özlem Et**, dated 1965.

Traffic flowing off the bridge and out of Perşembe Pazarı is funnelled into Necatibey Caddesi, which cuts through the grid of the Kemankeş district, parallel to the shore, emerging into daylight in leafy Tophane. In the first street on the right **Mabel** (Gümrük Sok 11) sells melting chocolate wafers (*gofret*) and chocolate-covered orange rind and hazelnuts. Opposite is the back entrance to the **Yeraltı Camii** (Underground Mosque).

The interior is a series of low vaulted corridors dating to the eighth century, thought to be the dungeons of Galata Castle. The Byzantines stretched a chain from here across the Golden Horn to deter invaders. Worth noting is the tomb of two soldiers killed in the first Arab siege of Constantinople, in 714. Visitors are told not to make offerings or sacrifices, not to tie cloth or rags to the tomb, not to crawl around it, and so on.

To discover Karaköy's Russian Orthodox churches, halfway along Necatibey Caddesi, you go up and up – they were built on the top floors

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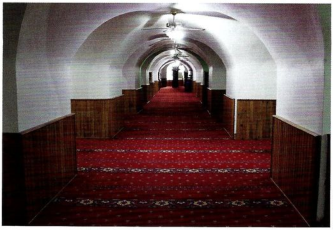

BRIAN MCKEE

of the apartments for pilgrims on their way to the Holy Land. You have to be looking down on the port from the heights of Galata to spot the turquoise domes and bell towers. The only one of the four currently in use, **Aya Panteleymon**, is perched on top of Hoca Tahsin Sokağı 19. Climb the worn marble steps, past the old apartments where many White Russians would have ended their days, and you come to a windowed exterior gallery with a magnificent view that includes at least two other rooftop churches with their turquoise domes. Women in trousers change into the dresses piled in a box by the door.

The church has often been scorched by fire in its 140 years. Ten years ago, an artist from Moscow painted the new frescoes of saints. Older paintings at the back include a beautiful image of a boyish St Panteleymon as a doctor, with his medical instruments, before he was jailed by jealous rivals. A second painting of the saint, dated 1898, has a piece of his skeleton embedded in the picture. On Sundays they serve tea and food after the service.

Nearby is the Armenian **Church of St Gregory**, opposite the bikers' shop on Sakızcılar Sokağı. It is solid and austere, but the crypt is decorated with a collection of brilliant Delft tiles. This is a reminder that it was Armenian merchants who supplied the Topkapı.

Real food

The best tradesman's restaurant is **Nato Lokantası** (Karanlık Fırın Sok 4), opened in 1952, the year Turkey entered the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation; it did not seek customers who objected to that liaison. Halfway down Necatibey Caddesi – past the crossroads with the smart new hotel, **The Haze** – it is cheap and authentic. The *orman kebabı* (forest kebab), spicy, with meat and peas, is recommended, as well as the summer *patlıcan* (aubergine). Be sure to arrive before 1pm. Nato is not a place to be seen, but a place to eat; it rapidly fills up during the lunch hour and closes when the food has run out.

Equally traditional, for all its commerciality, is **Karaköy Güllüoğlu**, with its portraits in baklava of Atatürk and Mehmed the Conqueror. This is the best baklava in Istanbul. Find the shop under the multistorey car park in Kemankeş Caddesi, near the ferry stations. Order a mix of six baklava from the cashier, then take your receipt to the servers; or branch out with little soft green parcels of *fıstıklı gelin bohçası* (pistachio bride's dowry bundle). Less of a hassle for shoppers is their factory café at Mumhane Caddesi 171.

Next to the main Karaköy Güllüoğlu is the garishly lit **Namlı Gurme** (Rıhtım Cad 1), long famed for its *pastırma* (sun-dried beef coated in a paste of pepper, fenugreek and garlic). Such charcuteries were always key to Karaköy, supplying meze to gentlemen heading home on the ferry. Other staples were *lakerda* (bonito in brine), Caspian *havyar* (caviar), golden *tütün balık* (smoked mackerel), and the best Ezine *beyaz peynir* (white cheese), from the Aegean. Namlı has these and more and has cleverly started serving food as well as selling it over the counter. Both establishments depend on passing trade from the cruise liners for their existence, but locals go as well. **Port Namlı**, on the quay by the boat stations (Rıhtım Cad 7), serves all-day breakfast.

One fixture likely to vanish from the Karaköy scene is **Liman Lokantası**, queen of Istanbul restaurants. While there's time, take the creaking lift to the top floor of the Yolcu Salonu, the passenger terminal (the entrance is at the side). The Liman was the last venue for dancing in Istanbul from the Jazz Age. Its old parquet floor still attracts weddings. Gaze at Seraglio Point over *hünkar beğendi* (classic lamb or chicken on a bed of puréed aubergine) and a glass of Doluca, and make believe that time stood still.

Hot dinners

There's been an explosion of new restaurants in Karaköy in the past year or so. They first appeared on Kemankeş Caddesi. **Karaköy Lokantası** (No 37) has a thriving scene at night. The delicious turquoise-tiled walls make it rather noisy when it is crowded. But for a lazy lunch, it is the ideal rendezvous.

Local hands speak more highly of **Maya** at No 35. The atmosphere is minimalist and refined. Menus are based on seasonal ingredients. Do book, especially for dinner (+90 212 252 6884).

Ferahfeza, a new addition from the Leb-i-Derya team, is on the top floor of the Mimarlar Odası (Chamber of Architects) building at No 31. Small plates of modern Turkish cooking accompany a stunning view in two directions under Tom Dixon lights. Coffee is served with a deliciously intriguing shot of mastic with vodka and milk.

Farther along the street, in the restored **Fransız Geçidi** (French Arcade) between Kemankeş and Mumhane Caddesi, the cool wine bar **Bej** is owned by the furniture designers next door, **333km** – makers of its smooth rounded mirrors and tables. Across the arcade is the restaurant **Ma'Nâ**, all low-key elegance, with closely packed tables and crisp tablecloths. Look while you can upon the grand old post office, doomed despite its history and Parisian roof. The building facing it, which looks like a wedding cake, is the police station.

Given the imminent destruction of Michel Pasha's waterfront, the owners of stylish **Gaspar** (Arapoğlan Sok 6) wisely headed inland to a hitherto undreamt-of street running from Nato up to Kemeraltı Caddesi. A former printer's shop with a creamy sandstone classical façade, it was the place to be seen when it opened in January outranking even Ortaköy's Reina. On Friday and Saturday nights the tables are cleared to make a bar-room dance floor.

CLIVE CROOK

FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

Top left The Yeraltı Camii (Underground Mosque) in the basement of a former Genoese fortress that guarded the entrance to the Golden Horn Below left The regilded Aya Panteleymon, one of four Russian churches whose distinctive turquoise domes dot the Karaköy rooftops Above A taste for turquoise: Karaköy Lokantası was the first of a new wave of smart restaurants to open in the once-dodgy docklands

Tophane
A QUARTER IS BORN

The district of Tophane, landing point for generations of tourists before the arrival of the Orient Express, retains some of its historic reputation as a den of drugs and danger. The main street running up towards Galatasaray is Boğazkesen Caddesi. *Boğaz* means not only "strait" (referring to the Bosphorus) but also "throat"; so Boğazkesen Caddesi translates as either Strait-Cutter Street or Throat-Cutter Street. And it is just three years since a mob attacked art lovers on a gallery crawl here.

Yet the area is fast shedding its sinister past, with an influx of edgy artists joining the old artisans and a burgeoning café culture that is making it a must for any explorer of hip Istanbul.

It is in the cluster of streets leading to the Kılıç Ali Pasha Mosque that things are moving fastest. There are pretty corners for new cafés to drape themselves round, especially close to the little churches that lend old limewashed walls to the scenery. The **Merkez Meryam Anna Kilisesi**, a Turkish Orthodox church, lies on Ali Paşa Değirmeni Sokağı (close to the Russian Aya Panteleymon). In the narthex, a fine gilded boat with copper sails is a reminder of Tophane's maritime heritage.

A new French-style café opens almost weekly, and they are all beginning to look the same in their endless inventiveness. One that stands out is **Karabatak** (Ali Kaptan Sok 7), opened by the distributor for the Viennese coffee brand Julius Meinl in an old lathe workshop, with, of course, deliciously rich coffee. A library upstairs provides refuge from the crowds of chatterers.

Another pioneer of the Tophane look is the **SuB Hotel** (Necatibey Cad 91), whose lobby houses a delightful café, with hip industrial design and works from the district's thriving art scene on the walls.

Muhit (Kılıç Ali Paşa Mescidi Sok 9) is outstanding for drinks, especially the lemonade with fresh strawberries, to be sipped in the cool shade of the vine-draped pergola.

The teashop **Dem** (Hoca Tahsin Sok 17) offers a blessed change from all the coffee shops. Green, white, Oolong, *tütsülenmiş* (smoky), red, black, even Turkish teas are served in ceramic bowls. Delicious mini-burgers are an optional extra.

Beşaltı Kirvem Tantunu (Mumhane Cad 35) is a hole in the wall open till 8pm every day (except Saturdays, when they close at 6). This is sometimes all one feels like after a day of grazing. Described by the *Istanbul Eats* team as "Turkish tacos", *tantunis* are soft wraps rolled round fried beef strips with tomato and parsley. One is never enough; two is always regretted. Try sharing a second.

People come from all over the city to the **Galata Simitçisi** (Mumhane Cad 47). They make the traditional *simit* rings from dough dipped in molasses water (diluted *pekmez*), coated with sesame seeds and baked in a wood-burning oven – hornbeam logs are stacked outside.

Smart little shops are opening too. In Fransız Geçidi, check out the leather diaries at the **Kağıthane (House of Paper)**. Publishers of the iconic *Ece Ajandası* diary since 1910, **Afitap** have decamped from their vine-covered courtyard in Babıali (Istanbul's old Fleet Street), across the Golden Horn, to Necatibey Caddesi 30. They print 120,000 copies of their traditional black desk diary – stern, masculine and full of essential information about the financial year – now joined by more feminine pastel leather diaries and notebooks.

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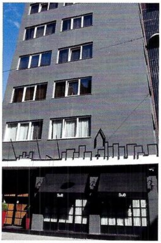

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CLIVE CROOK

Above and above right The SuB Hotel epitomises the new Karaköy look
Right Roma residents of Tophane, Karanfil (Carnation) and his wife
Below Graffiti recall 2013's Gezi resistance movement
Opposite, top Karabatak Café
Centre row Karaköy's ornate police station; the designer Karl Fey in his shop, 333km; the 15th-century Tophane foundry, now an art space
Bottom Richard Wentworth's 'False Ceiling' (2005), a layer of suspended books at Istanbul Modern

A honey pot for the arts

In 2010, during Istanbul's strange year as European Capital of Culture – a title somewhat embarrassingly shared with Pécs and Essen – a series of galleries in the working-class district of Tophane were subject to attacks by residents. At a time when the city's art scene was much hyped – Sotheby's had recently started sales in contemporary Turkish art – it gave pause for thought. Were these galleries just impositions upon areas that didn't want them? Four years later, many galleries have migrated to the gritty dock area where nobody lives, or up the hill to Taksim, and two of the prime movers and shakers have moved on, but Tophane seems destined to be synonymous with the city's art scene. Stroll in any direction from the tram stop to find new art spaces, though so discreet are they that it is worth taking one of the gallery walks organised by artwalkistanbul.com. Most close on Monday (as do the boutiques and restaurants in this area), and for six weeks in summer.

A spectacular space in a converted flour mill, **Manâ** (Ali Paşa Değirmeni Sok 16) is a gallery gunning for blue-chip respectability. One of their most exciting artists is Pınar Yolaçan, notorious for her photographs of respectable-looking older women dressed in the intestines of animals, tripe looking unexpectedly like lace. Nearby is the photography gallery **Elipsis** (on the corner of Hoca Tahsin and Akçe Sok), and **ArtSumer** (Mumhane Cad 67).

Kemeraltı Caddesi, which the tram follows to Karaköy, has **Krampf** (No 41, next to the chic Gaspar restaurant). It also passes the old **Greek Primary School** (No 49) with its stern Neoclassical façade, a venue for non-commercial art events. Opposite the entrance to Istanbul Modern is **Studio X** (Meclis-i Mebusan Cad 35), an outpost of Columbia University.

Inland, in the muddle of streets above the Tophane tram stop, **Depo** (Lüleci Hendek Cad 12) – an old tobacco warehouse with huge, dimly lit rooms and timber floors, next to the **Galata Falls café** – stages the most politically outspoken art shows. More commercial galleries are on Boğazkesen. **Mixer** (No 45) is in a 500-square-metre basement. **Daire** (No 76), up on the right, is a small, neat cube with a polished green concrete floor.

The Tophane Effect is less café-driven here but almost more fun. Chickens scratch around in front of the offices of the independent radio station Açık Radyo. In a cul-de-sac behind an Ottoman fountain, stately Karanfil presides over his

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CLIVE CROOK

community of affable Roma. You might be forgiven for thinking you had wandered into a small Anatolian village, with its whitewashed cottages, smoking chimneys, scrap-iron yard and basking dogs.

But the owners of the *pide* oven and barbers are from Sivas or Bitlis and are often cited as examples of Istanbul's resistance to change. Belligerent club-bearing youths gather to accuse patrons of drinking wine (now banned at openings). Mixer had to pull the shutters down on opening night in May when it showed the work of the usually secretive graffiti artist Cins.

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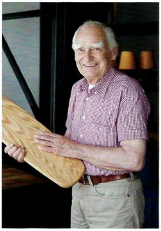
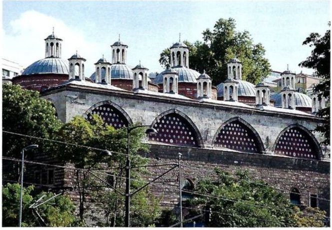
BRIAN MCKEE


FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG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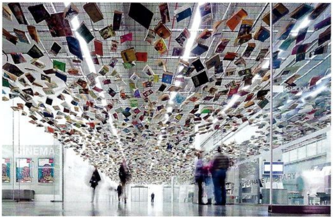
Times past

In all the hype and hurry of the new age, Tophane's Ottoman heritage is often neglected: visitors flit past it on the 10-minute tram ride from Kabataş across the Golden Horn to Sultanahmet. Yet for centuries this was Istanbul's chief point of embarkation, the place from which fleets departed on campaigns, where you could step aboard a lightning-fast but precarious caique across the Bosphorus.

The area takes its name from the Tophane-i Amire, the Ottoman cannon foundry which dominates the neighbourhood. Its 15th-century industrial architecture is reminiscent of the kitchens of the Topkapı and its domes and tiny turrets are an unmistakable landmark. These days the foundry is an exhibition space for the Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, whose home is the nearby old Ottoman parliament building in Fındıklı.


MURAT GERMEN

Make for the terrace in front of it, little visited but freely accessible, for the view of Sinan's important 16th-century Kılıç Ali Pasha Mosque, and the pretty 1732 fountain next to it. The sea, once so much a part of the neighbourhood, is just visible. It is hard to imagine that the water used to lap the mosque's foundations.

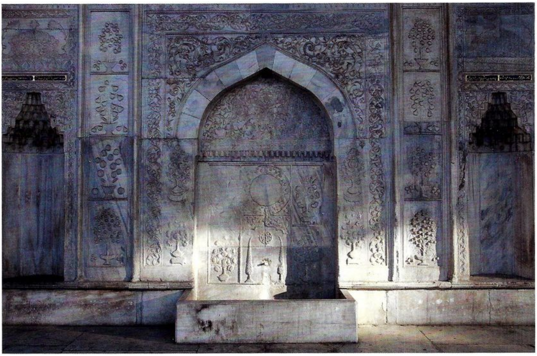
Opposite the foundry, behind another mosque, the Baroque Nusretiye, with its spindly minarets, is **Istanbul Modern**, which opened in 2004 in a former 1950s warehouse, a suave, confident place. Happily it is to be joined in 2016 by the **Museum of Painting and Sculpture**, which long languished in a forgotten wing of Dolmabahçe Palace. Work has started on the zany new warehouse space being created for it. Don't miss the temporary shows being staged as newly restored paintings come back from the conservators. These are the long-lost icons of early Turkish Western-style painting.

Having the sea shut away behind tall concrete blocks is a frustration in Tophane. If you need sea air, take the tram one stop down to the resolutely unfashionable little seaside park at Fındıklı. You can soak in the sunshine with a view to die for, surrounded by sculptures from the old Fine Arts Academy. Alternatively, have a slow lunch at Istanbul Modern's **Borsa Restaurant**, but check that a leviathan of a cruise ship will not be moored in front before you book.

What Tophane lacks in boating life, it makes up for in walks. For a sense of what it was like to arrive in the city in the days of sail or steam, climb one of the streets up to Beyoğlu, such as Kumbaracı Yokuşu or Lüleci Hendek, where covetable nargile pipe bowls (*lüle*) were once made. Both these streets start at the convenient Galata Falls café, and in summer are best savoured in the early evening, when the little shops and cafés at the top of the hill come alive.

For a gentler exit, head up Boğazkesen to Cihangir for a

TRAVEL NOTES



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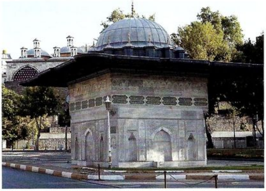
Bedtime storeys

Travellers who like high ceilings and space prefer Pera's old apartments to the boutique hotels of Sultanahmet. Hotels by the dozen have opened behind newly cleaned ashlar façades. Excitingly, areas no hotelier dared to tread are being revived, such as Tophane and Cihangir. Many hotels can be booked through our website cornucopiahotels.com.

BEYOĞLU HOTELS

TEPEBAŞI Meşrutiyet Caddesi, overlooking the Golden Horn, is where hotel life kicked off in Pera. It is still home to the **Pera Palace** (No 52, +90 212 377 4000), built to serve the Orient Express, reopened in 2010. The **Adahan**, near Şişhane (Gen. Yazgan Sok 14, +90 212 243 8581), is an exemplary minimalist restoration of a grand building. The mattresses are very coveted. Step out on to the rooftop terrace for a view of the Galata Tower next to Ayasofya. The **Palazzo Donizetti Pasha** (Meşrutiyet Cad 85, +90 212 249 5151) is more old-fashioned but good value, while the **Rixos** (No 44, +90 212 377 7000) is out-and-out arabesque. The **Armada Pera** (Hamalbaşı Cad 28, +90 212 293 7373) is a glossy restoration facing Pera House, near the Balık Pazarı meyhanes. New places are opening in Aynalıçeşme, an unspoilt refuge across busy Tarlabaşı Bulvarı. **Homage Istanbul** (Emin Camii Sok 20, +90 212 250 4368) has good-value modern apartments for short or long stays.



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TAKSIM At the opposite end of Beyoğlu to Tepebaşı, this is the hub of downtown Istanbul and home to the big hotel chains. The **Hilton Istanbul Bosphorus**, on Cumhuriyet Caddesi, the first Hilton in Europe, has a pool in the shape of Mr Hilton's footprint (+90 212 315 6000). The **Divan** (Cumhuriyet Cad 2, +90 212 315 5500) is famous for its patisserie, but it won laurels as a field hospital during the Gezi protests. The **Martı** (Abdulhakhamit Cad 25, +90 212 987 4000) overlooks Dolapdere, the Roma quarter soon to be home to Koç Contemporary, but better known to old hands for Apik, the round-the-clock tripe-soup shop.

CİHANGİR / ÇUKURCUMA Clever conversions make the hillside between Taksim and Tophane a good base. **Witt Istanbul** (Defterdar Yokuşu 26, +90 212 293 1500) is a chic makeover of a Sixties ad agency. The **Corinne**, on Turnacıbaşı Caddesi (+90 212 293 9494), is a breezy 1920s conversion in the antiques district. Down the hill, in 19th-century apartments, is **The House Hotel Galatasaray** (Bostanbaşı Cad 19, +90 212 244 3400).

FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

TOP AND LEFT THE 1732 TOPHANE FOUNTAIN ABOVE ABDÜLMECID'S PARADE PAVILION

NEAR THE GALATA TOWER Topping the chic list is the well-hidden **Georges Hotel**, on smart Serdar-ı Ekrem Cad (No 24). Equally discreet are the **Baylosuites**, just below the tower (Galata Kulesi Sok 24, +90 212 245 9860). Both have classic Old City views.

DOCKLAND HOTELS

KARAKÖY It is odd that this major crossroads never had hotels. Now there is **Vault Karaköy** (Bankalar Cad 5, +90 212 244 3400), a conversion of the elegant Sümerbank, and the modern **Haze** (Necatibey Cad 38, +90 212 293 9955), which has a sea view from the top floor.

TOPHANE The pioneering **SuB Hotel** (Necatibey Cad 91, +90 212 243 0005) combines industrial design and creature comforts. The tiny **Maproom** (Kılıç Ali Paşa Mescidi Sok 13, +90 212 293 8008) has the air of a pop-up hotel, with no foyer and rich street life on the doorstep. Secluded in the dells of Beyoğlu is **Tomtom Suites** (Tomtom Kaptak Sok 18, +90 212 292 4949).

On the move

Akbil smart tickets You can use these cards (from tram stops, stations and kiosks) on most public transport. Trams The civilised **Taksim–Tünel** tram saves a hike. The air-conditioned **Kabataş–Zeytinburnu** tram whisks you to the Topkapı.

Metro The new **Hacıosman–Yenikapı** line links Beyoğlu to the upper Bosphorus and the Old City. It also links with the Bosphorus tunnel, and soon Atatürk Airport. Useful stops are **Osmanbey** (for Nişantaşı), **Taksim** (for the Taksim end of Beyoğlu and Cihangir), **Şişhane** (for the Galata end of Beyoğlu. Funiculars The **Taksim–Kabataş** line connects Taksim with the ferries and with the tram to the Old City. The old **Tünel** line links İstiklâl to Karaköy. Taxis Taxis are easy to find, even in rush hour. For longer journeys use taxi ranks. The Pera Palace rank has a good name. Boats Ferries and swift sea-buses from **Kabataş** serve the Asian shore, the Princes Islands, and Yalova, on the Sea of Marmara. **Karaköy** has boats to Kadıköy, with a small jetty for the Üsküdar–Golden Horn line.

Farther afield

Most cultural musts, such as the Old City's Byzantine and Ottoman sights (see CORNUCOPIA 50), are in easy reach of the European City. A 25-minute metro journey and a quick taxi also take you to two fine Bosphorus museums: the **Sakıp Sabancı** in Emirgan (+90 212 277 2200) and the **Sadberk Hanım** in Büyükdere (+90 212 242 3813). **Maslak Kasırları** is a little-visited palace on the edge of the Belgrade Forest where Abdülahmid lived in his youth. Take the metro to Atatürk Oto Sanayi.

Two Golden Horn sights, the 18th-century imperial pavilion **Aynalıkavak Kasrı** (daily 9am–5pm, closed Mon and Thurs) and the **Koç Industrial Museum** (Tues–Fri 10am–5pm, Sat–Sun 10am–7pm, closed Mon), amply repay the short taxi ride from the Pera Palace rank, or the ferry to Hasköy from Karaköy. The Koç has good restaurants and offers short boat tours.

THE ART BEAT

WHERE THE ART IS: FROM THE GALLANT CONTRIBUTIONS OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE TO THE THRIVING CONTEMPORARY GALLERIES. BY TIM CORNWELL AND VICTORIA KHROUNDINA

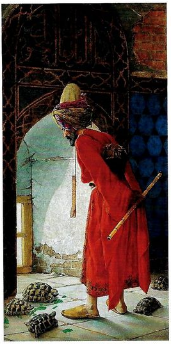
The 21st century saw Istanbul discovered by the global art world. Turkish artists who have made their names run from the moving-image artist Kutluğ Ataman to the Turkish-born hyper-realist Taner Ceylan and the photographer/printmaker Civan Özkanoğlu. There is the neon artist Sarkis, the film-maker Ali Kazma, and the fashion designer Hussein Chalayan. But look for a national gallery boasting a benchmark collection of Turkish contemporary art, and you won't find it. Instead galleries are typically founded by philanthropists with little or no state support, reminiscent of the American galleries founded in the late 19th and early 20th century by industrial dynasties.

ISTANBUL MODERN

The opening of Istanbul Modern in a former customs warehouse in Karaköy in 2004 was a turning point. It has since been a hub for the Istanbul Biennial, and a catalyst in a boom decade in Turkish modern art, with an explosion of private galleries in Karaköy and elsewhere.

Eczacıbaşı Holding founded the gallery with its own collection, currently shown chronologically in its *Past and Future* exhibition, with eye-catching works ranging from Ramazan Bayrakoğlu's *Fire*, 2010, to *The 10th Muharrem*, 1909, by the Italian Fausto Zonaro, official court artist of Abdülhamid II, depicting flagellant dervishes. The gallery has also staged major retrospectives of such artists as Erol Akyavaş, and in January showcases the veteran Turkish artist and film-maker Mehmet Güleryüz.
Antrepo 4, Tophane; daily 10–6, Thurs 10–8, closed Mon; +90 212 334 7300, istanbulmodern.org/en

THE PERA MUSEUM


PERA MUSEUM

OSMAN HAMDİ BEY'S TORTOISE TRAINER AT THE PERA MUSEUM

The Pera Museum opened in 2005 on the site of the former Bristol Hotel as a private museum created by the Suna and İnan Kıraç Foundation. It has a notable collection of Ottoman and Orientalist paintings from the 17th–19th centuries, particularly of Osman Hamdi Bey. His painting *The Tortoise Trainer*, 1906, bought in 2004 for a record TL3.5 million, is a star attraction. Another is de Favray's 1773 panorama (page 42). There are excellent displays of Anatolian weights and measures, Kütahya tiles and ceramics. The foundation also runs the nearby Istanbul Research Institute, with a collection of 100,000 photographs of the Republican era. Temporary shows have ranged from hard-hitting contemporary Turkish work to Warhol and Picasso.
Meşrutiyet Cad 65, Tepebaşı; daily 10–7, Sun 12–6, closed Mon; +90 212 334 9900; en.peramuzesi.org.tr

ARTER

Founded in 2010 on İstiklâl Caddesi, ARTER is now a first port of call for contemporary work by artists such as Kutluğ Ataman or Volkan Aslan. It is one of several institutions overseen and funded by the Koç family, whose foundation sponsors the Istanbul Biennial until 2017. They plan to open a major new gallery, Koç Contemporary, in 2016, creating a competitor in Beyoğlu for Istanbul Modern – hopefully a productive rivalry.
İstiklâl Cad 211, Beyoğlu; Tues–Thurs 11–7, Fri–Sun 12–8; +90 212 243 3767; arter.org.tr

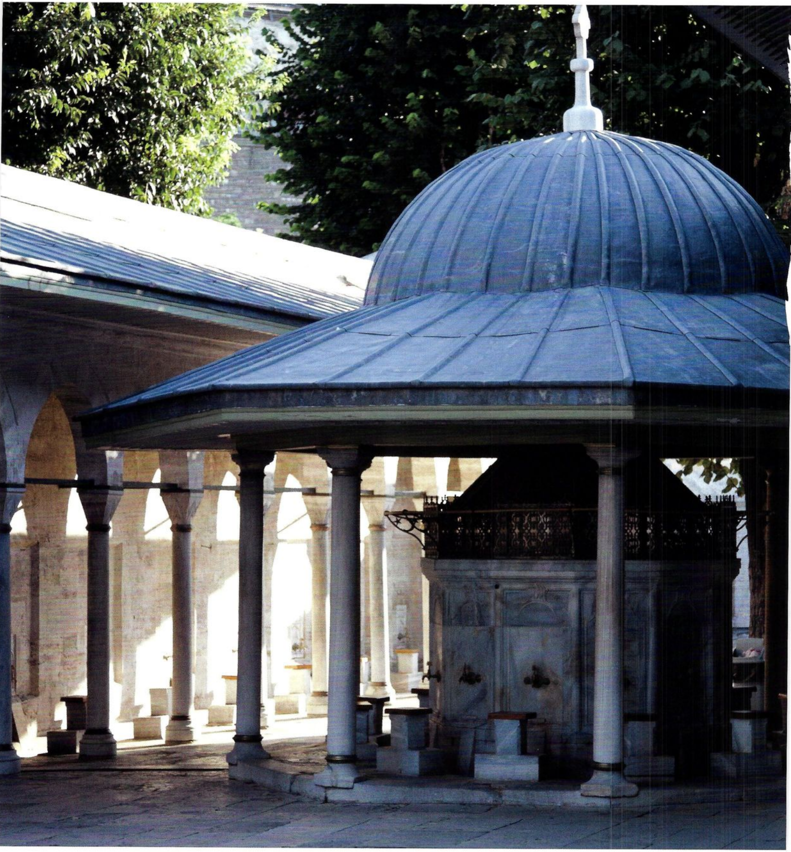
SALT

The not-for-profit SALT cultural institution was founded from the collections of the Garanti Bank, including the former Ottoman Bank, but its driving force has been curator Vasıf Kortun, dubbed "the father of Istanbul's art world". SALT includes SALT Beyoğlu, a 19th-century apartment block on İstiklâl with three floors of dramatic exhibition spaces and a walk-in art cinema, and SALT Galata, the imperial Ottoman Bank, with a library said to include over a million digitised items from modern art to architecture and social and economic studies.
SALT BEYOĞLU *İstiklâl Cad 136; +90 212 377 4200, saltonline.org*
SALT GALATA *Bankalar Cad 11, Karaköy; +90 212 334 2200; saltonline.org. Both Tues–Sat, 12–8*

GALLERIES

Beyoğlu, no longer playing second fiddle to the "gallery hub" of Tophane, has carved out a name as a contemporary art stronghold. The famous Mısır Apartments (İstiklâl Cad 163) has notable players: **Galeri Nev** (galerinevistanbul.com) – a large one-room space so artworks come at you all at once – has a roster seasoned with names such as the painter Erol Akyavaş and Alev Ebüzziya, who makes timeless bowls. **Pi Artworks** is more experimental (piartworks.com). In Tepebaşı, **Galerist**'s distressed walls (Meşrutiyet Cad 67) contrast with cutting-edge work by Nil Yalter, and Hussein Chalayan, designer of gravity-defying clothes. **Sıraserviler**, between Taksim and Cihangir, has three excellent galleries: hidden in the Hrisovergi Apartments, Kerimcan Güleryüz's **Empire Project** (No 10, theempireproject.com) is not afraid to shock and tickle. At **Rodeo** (No 49, rodeo-gallery.com), Sylvia Kouvali curates inventive shows in old rooms with creaking floorboards. **Pilot** (No 83, pilotgaleri.com), in a converted 1970s nightclub, represents Halil Altındere and Şener Özmen, both noted for biting irony.

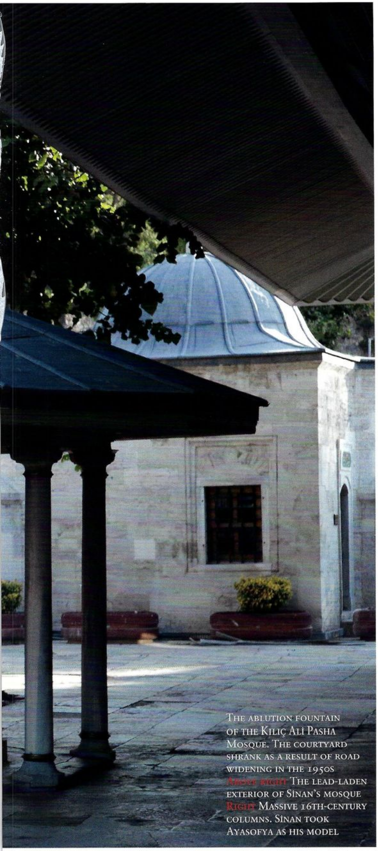
Lower Tophane has **Krampf** (Kemeraltı Cad 141, krampfgallery.com), who relocated here from New York in 2012, **Elipsis** (Hoca Tahsin Sok, elipsisgallery.com) and **Galeri Mana** (Ali Paşa Değirmeni Sok 16, galerimana.com). Go inland for **Depo** (Lüleci Hendek 12, depoistanbul.net), discreet **Daire** (No 76, diaresanat.com), **Mixer** (Boğazkesen Cad 45, mixerarts.com), and **Galeri Non** (Nur-i Ziya Sok 16, galerinon.com).



Kılıç Ali Pasha Mosque

A FINAL FLOURISH

The Kılıç Ali Pasha complex, completed in 1580 and newly restored, was the collaboration of two grand old men past their peak. Kılıç Ali Pasha, hero of Lepanto, was an admiral in his eighties. The imperial architect Sinan was in his nineties, but the result is a bold and beautiful venture. Photographs by Fritz von der Schulenburg



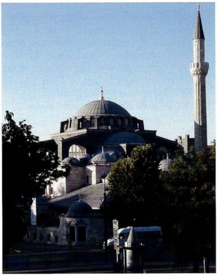
The ablution fountain of the Kılıç Ali Pasha Mosque. The courtyard shrank as a result of road widening in the 1950s Above right The lead-laden exterior of Sinan's mosque Right Massive 16th-century columns. Sinan took Ayasofya as his model

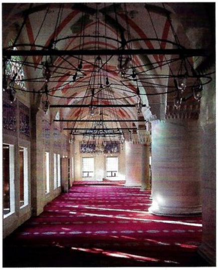
Mimar Sinan's important 16th-century Kılıç Ali Pasha Mosque was commissioned by the Calabrian-born Giovanni Dionigi Galeni, who was captured by Barbary pirates on his way to Naples to study for the priesthood, became a galley slave and ended up in the service of the sultan, finally being made an Ottoman grand admiral and becoming Ali Pasha.

The mosque originally stood on the Bosphorus shoreline in full view of Topkapı Palace. The plan is a copy of Ayasofya's, and it has the same calligraphic discs in the corners below the central dome.

Kılıç Ali Pasha gained his epithet (*kılıç* means "sword") by rescuing his squadron at the disastrous battle of Lepanto in 1571. He died a sprightly 90-year-old in the arms of a concubine (strictly against doctor's orders). Like other Ottoman admirals, in winter he kept sailors employed building astonishing monuments. He oversaw the only surviving Sinan building in the Topkapı harem, Murad III's domed bedchamber, which has tiles similar to those in the mosque.

Two unmagical restorations (one to repair damage done by the other) have hardly been helped by brash paintwork and baroque chairs, yet nothing can detract from the architectural wizardry. To see Sinan's artistry





stripped to bare essentials, step into the hamam next door.

The story of the Kılıç Ali Pasha Hamam parallels that of Tophane itself. After years of closure, and a painstaking seven-year restoration, it has reopened in a style that would have made Sinan proud, and is now more enticing architecturally than the mosque next door. Built as part of the mosque complex, the hamam would have served sailors (*levends*) under the command of the admiral Kılıç Ali Pasha, and their wives.

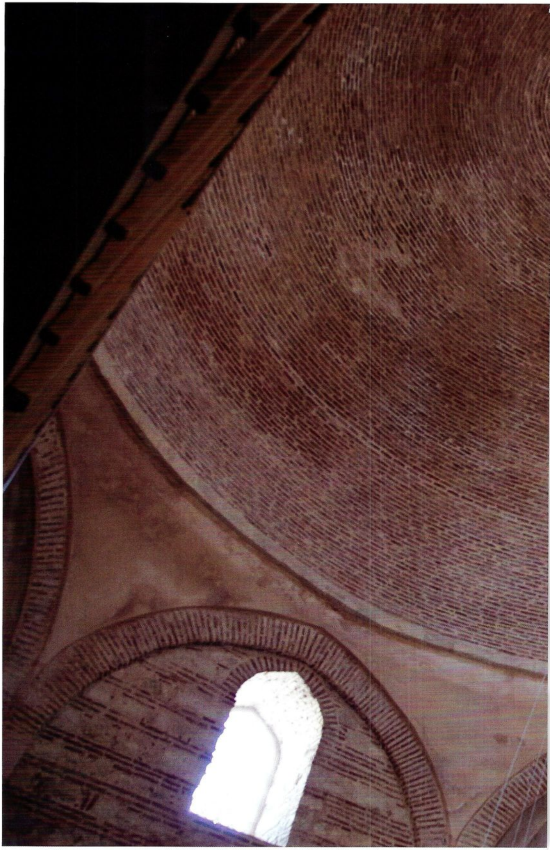
Today, a blissful two hours at the baths begins with a glass of sherbet, made by the owner's mother from *kızılcık* (sour Cornelian cherry), with a dose of aromatic sweetness (it might be peach or plum, depending on the season) designed to ensure a visitor's blood-sugar levels don't fall too low in the heat.

An ordinary hamam can be a steamy, enclosed affair; this is the opposite. The restoration, at a cost of $3 to 4 million, has exposed the pale pastel brickwork in the airy entrance room, complemented by a new balcony and changing rooms of white oak. The external restoration included replacing nearly 500 handmade glass domed roundels that let in light from above.

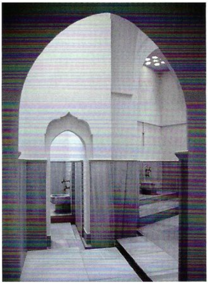
Lying back on the marble in the hot room (*sıcaklık*), you can admire the perfect white curves of Sinan's arches and roof, before being rubbed clean with a mitt, blanketed in foam and given a careful massage.

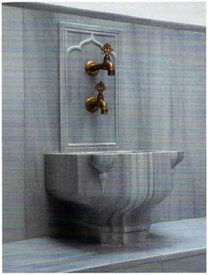
This is a special-event hamam more than a place to swap local gossip with friends. On your own, it's a contemplative, therapeutic setting, airy and light.

Derya, the hamam boutique, sells the cotton wraps (*peştemal*), towels, bathrobes, soaps, bowls and ewers that are part of hamam culture. The hamam is open 15 hours a day, seven days a week: women 8am–4pm, men 4.30–11.30pm. kilicalipasahamami.com; +90 (212) 393 8010.



PALE AND INTERESTING: THE NEWLY EXPOSED BRICKWORK IN THE DOME OF THE DISROBING HALL. EVERY BRICK WAS CLEANED BY HAND

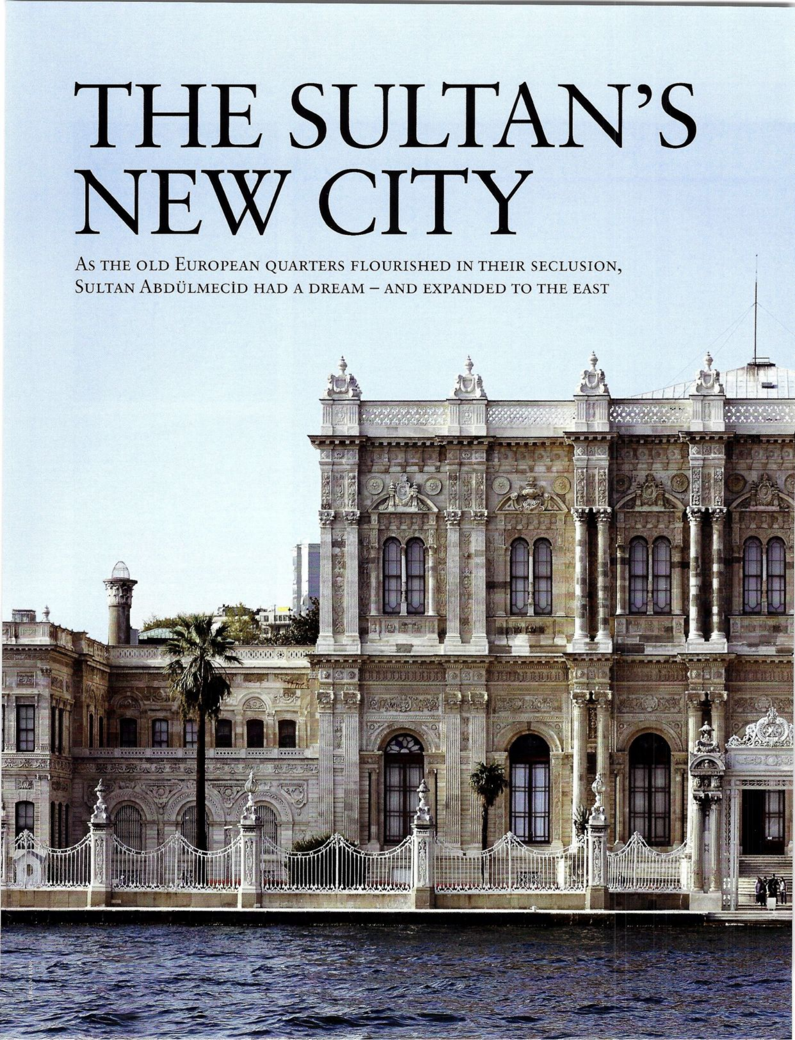




Opposite In the Kılıç Ali Pasha Hamam's 'sıcaklık', or bathing hall, the dome is pierced, like the night sky, with star-shaped lights. Bathers lie on the 'göbek taşı', the hot marble platform in the centre, and gaze at the ceiling
Left and top Looking through a series of arches to one of the private bathing rooms in the corners of the hamam
Above A basin ('kurna') overflowing with hot running water. Bathers use a copper dish to scoop the water and pour it over themselves

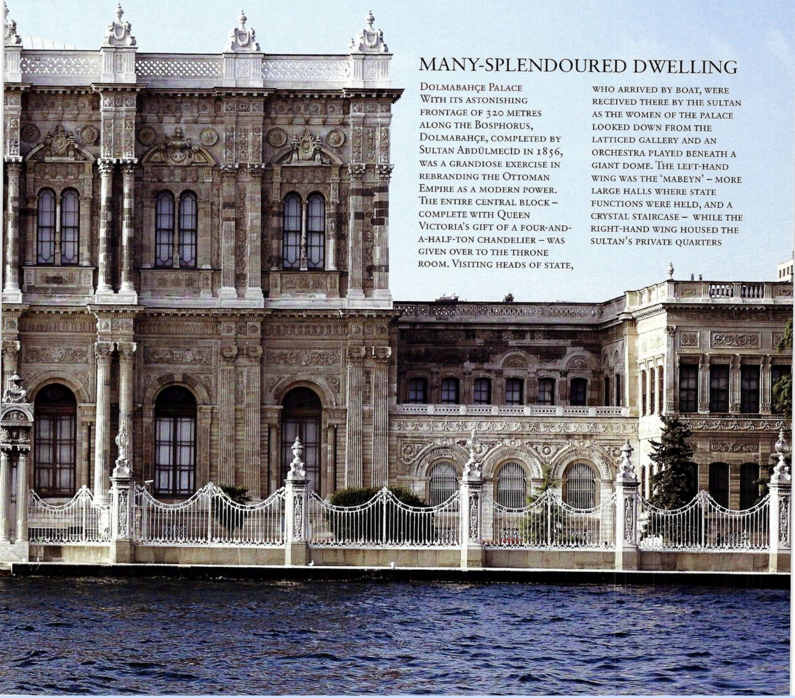
THE SULTAN'S NEW CITY

As the old European quarters flourished in their seclusion, Sultan Abdülmecid had a dream – and expanded to the east



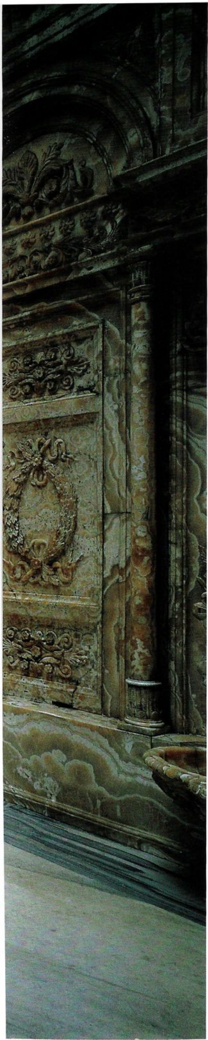
Dolmabahçe and Nişantaşı · 118
A fairytale waterside palace, shopping heaven for label queens and the Linden Pavilion, a Baroque pearl in Arcadia

Beşiktaş and Ortaköy · 138
A trio of founding fathers, mettlesome football fans, polemic in the park, Yildiz Palace, and Ortaköy, the grand finale



MANY-SPLENDOURED DWELLING

Dolmabahçe Palace
With its astonishing frontage of 320 metres along the Bosphorus, Dolmabahçe, completed by Sultan Abdülmecid in 1856, was a grandiose exercise in rebranding the Ottoman Empire as a modern power. The entire central block – complete with Queen Victoria's gift of a four-and-a-half-ton chandelier – was given over to the throne room. Visiting heads of state, who arrived by boat, were received there by the sultan as the women of the palace looked down from the latticed gallery and an orchestra played beneath a giant dome. The left-hand wing was the 'mabeyn' – more large halls where state functions were held, and a crystal staircase – while the right-hand wing housed the sultan's private quarters

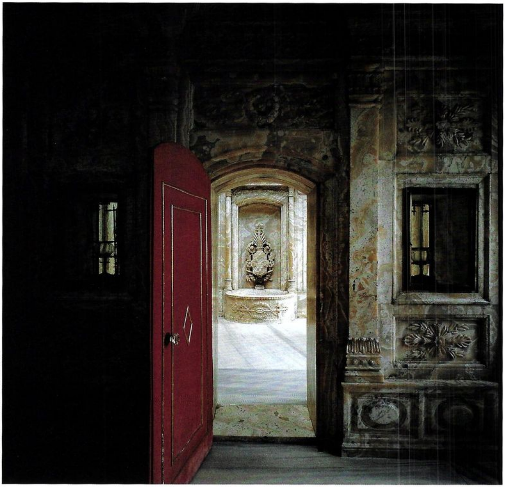


Abdülmecid I's splendid palace at Dolmabahçe (literally Filled Garden), transformed a magical if faintly medieval and muddled image of the Ottomans into the dynamic new face of empire. Constructed by the Balyans, a dynasty of Armenian Ottoman builders and architects, the palace undoubtedly has looks, as one would expect from Abdülmecid, the glamorous aesthete who commissioned it as part of his new city.

Some say it is a white elephant, but, like Ludwig of Bavaria's palaces, it has repaid its owners many times over. At the time it convinced the West to back the Empire, which might otherwise have been swept away by the Russians.

Sultan Abdülaziz, who succeeded his brother, was also a great builder, adding the Çırağan and Beylerbeyi Palaces; Abdülhamid II, who followed, abandoned Dolmabahçe altogether. The family moved back in the reign of Mehmed V (1909–18), and it was from here that the last sultan, Mehmed VI Vahdettin, left for exile in France in 1922. The last caliph, Abdülmecid Efendi, a respected artist, stayed on until the caliphate, too, was abolished in 1924.

A visit involves a long trek and often a very long queue, though there are splendid moments, such as the hamams and the throne room with its chandelier. As an alternative, a visit to Ihlamur Kasrı, Abdülmecid I's doll's-house pavilion of the same period, a ten-minute taxi ride away, is more poignant and altogether less stressful.



PHOTOGRAPHS: FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

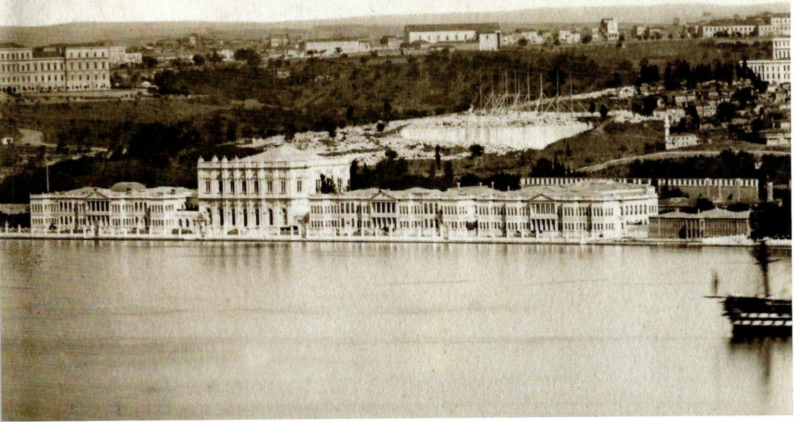
The palace baths
Dolmabahçe was a symbol of Western modernity, but it did not neglect the most sacrosanct Ottoman space, the hamam. There are baths in both the harem, the women's quarters, and the 'selamlik', the men's quarters, which had windows on to the Bosphorus

Left The bathing chamber in the Marble Hamam (Somakİ Hamam), in the 'selamlik', is a glowing vision in watery alabaster. At night, lanterns were placed in the windows on either side of the door to the massage room
Above A view through to an alabaster fountain

Following pages, left Skylights create dramatic shadows in the Marble Hamam
Right In the harem's Tiled Hamam (Çinİlİ Hamam), Liberty-style flower motifs surround an earlier fountain with an ornate bird sculpture

PHOTOGRAPHS: FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

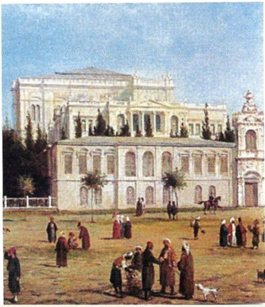
PANORAMIC PHOTOGRAPH OF DOLMABAHÇE, MAÇKA AND BEŞİKTAŞ, 1873
ABDÜLMECİD I'S WATERSIDE PALACE TRIGGERED A BUILDING BOOM THAT CONTINUED UNDER HIS SUCCESSORS. BEHIND THE PALACE ON THE SHORE IS THE BUILDING SITE FOR THE AZİZİYE MOSQUE, LATER ABANDONED, AND BEHIND THAT IS MAÇKA PARK. THE TAŞKIŞLA BARRACKS (1852, NOW ISTANBUL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY) ARE ON THE HILL ON THE FAR LEFT, BELOW WHAT IS NOW TAKSİM SQUARE. IN THE CENTRE OF THE PICTURE IS AKARETLER, TWO CURVED STREETS BUILT IN 1867. ABOVE IT STANDS THE MASSIVE SİLAHHANE ARSENAL (ALSO 1867) AND THE WAR ACADEMY (NOW THE MILITARY MUSEUM). THE OLD VILLAGE OF BEŞİKTAŞ IS ON THE SHORE ON THE FAR RIGHT, AND THE EMBRYONIC QUARTERS OF TEŞVİKİYE AND NİŞANTAŞI ARE ABOVE IT, TOWARDS THE SKYLINE



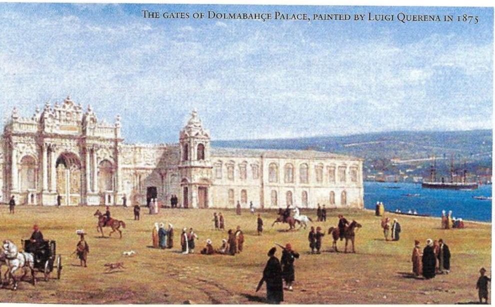
Dolmabahçe and Nişantaşı

HOW THE SULTAN MOVED HEAVEN AND EARTH

DISSATISFIED WITH THE TOPKAPI, SULTAN ABDÜLMECİD BUILT HIS MODERN PALACE OF DOLMABAHÇE AND PLANNED A NEW WESTERN-STYLE CITY AROUND IT. THE HILLS BEHIND WERE WHERE THE OTTOMAN ELITE BUILT THEIR MANSIONS. THESE HAVE GIVEN WAY TO APARTMENTS, BUT THE DISTRICTS OF NİŞANTAŞI, TEŞVİKİYE AND MAÇKA ARE STILL THE COOLEST PLACES TO SHOP, EAT AND WANDER. INTRODUCTION BY ANDREW FINKEL. HISTORICAL NOTES BY BURAK ÇETİNTAŞ



BURAK ÇETINTAŞ ARCHIVE

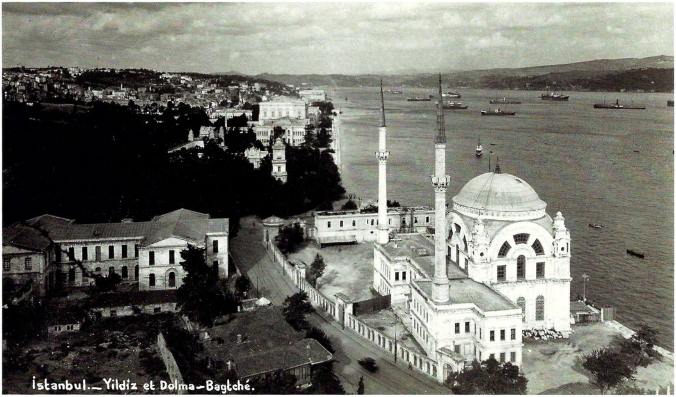


THE GATES OF DOLMABAHÇE PALACE, PAINTED BY LUIGI QUERENA IN 1875

AZIZE TAYLAN COLLECTION

Dolmabahçe Palace is a significant landmark in the incorporation of the lower Bosphorus, formerly an outlying region of hunting grounds, fishing villages and summer palaces, into the city proper. Abdülmecid I encouraged a building boom that was carried on enthusiastically under Abdülaziz and Abdülhamid II.

As the modern quarters of Nişantaşı, Teşvikiye and Maçka became established, Istanbul was transformed. The decade-long construction of the palace (finished in 1856) ushered in the ferry system to carry artisans from their homes across the water. A long, straight avenue of plane trees flanked a new metalled road all the way along the coast to Ortaköy. The barracks on the

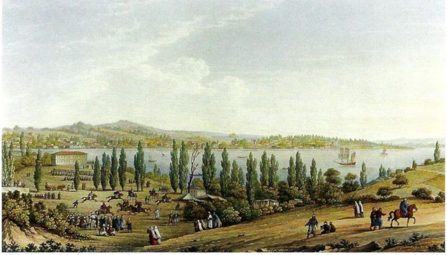


BURAK ÇETINTAŞ ARCHIVE

hill that guarded the palace spawned a military complex, including academies that in time turned into Istanbul Technical University and the Military Museum, with its fabulous collection of Ottoman field tents and historic memorabilia.

Abdülmecid (1839–61) planned his new Western-style town with a grid of streets that caught a north breeze off the Bosphorus. Today, he would be proud that his investment has turned into the nation's hothouse for creative design. His brother and successor, Sultan Abdülaziz (1861–76), commissioned a huge mosque directly behind the palace – the foundations are visible on the left of the 1873 panorama (previous pages). It was abandoned after his death. For his bureaucrats Abdülaziz built terraced houses at the far Beşiktaş end of the palace, which now form a mini Bond Street of galleries, shops and restaurants, a mere taster for the glut at the top of the hill in Abdi İpekçi Caddesi.

The shift in Istanbul's centre of gravity accelerated after the Second World War, as well-heeled residents moved from the decaying neighbourhoods in the Old City and Beyoğlu, to Art Deco apartment blocks in Maçka and Nişantaşı. The transformation was complete with the opening of Europe's first Hilton in 1955, in time for the IMF annual meeting – an unashamedly Modernist edifice that dominated the skyline of this "new" Istanbul.



SOTHEBY'S

Dolmabahçe, 1931

A French postcard of Dolmabahçe (top) shows the palace with its clock tower, along the Bosphorus shore, with the mosque and opera house in the foreground. The mosque is still standing, but the Neoclassical opera house to its left was pulled down in 1937, giving way to the İnönü Stadium. The secluded Yıldız Palace, Abdülhamid II's home from 1877, is in the distance on the far left.

Maçka Park, 1817

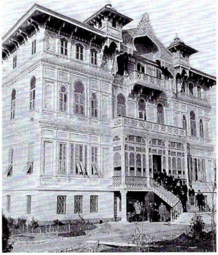
The engraving above by Michel-François Préault shows that Maçka Park, which had been royal territory since Süleyman the Magnificent's day, was an established pleasure ground in 1817. Sultans would climb the hill to the red-roofed kiosk to enjoy the view. Harem women here watch horsemen play jereed, a game involving javelins. Beyond the cypress trees is the garden where Dolmabahçe (literally Filled Garden) would be built.

The vanished wooden palaces of Nişantaşı

Abdülmecid I and Abdülaziz both favoured stone as a building material. But Abdülhamid II reverted to the traditional use of wood. The building frenzy that started in the 1870s during his reign saw the pashas of his court circle pepper the new districts of Nişantaşı and Teşvikiye with wooden mansions on a truly palatial scale. More than 30 bedrooms and four reception rooms were not uncommon, as well as elaborate music rooms and gigantic conservatories.

While the districts of Teşvikiye and Nişantaşı were still heathland in Abdülmecid's day, by 1900 no fewer than 28 such mansions were recorded. Sadly, not a single one now remains, but we have photographs to attest to their unimaginable extravagance.

The magnificent white-painted mansion below belonged to Halil Rifat Pasha, Abdülhamid's grand vizier from 1895 to 1901. It survived into the 1960s. According to the pasha's granddaughter, it took the new owners, Milli Reasürans, just one night to pull the whole thing down. It is now a multistorey car park.



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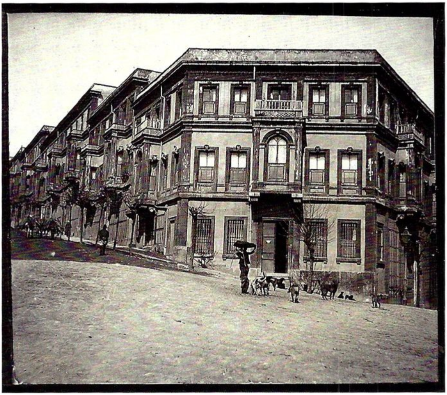
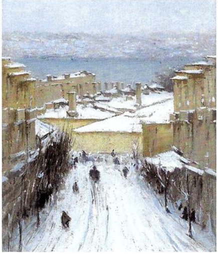
Above The 1890s Halil Rifat Pasha Mansion in Nişantaşı, built in wood for one of Abdülamid's many grand viziers
Opposite, top A view of Dolmabahçe Palace and the Bosphorus in 1931
Opposite, below Maçka Park and the Bosphorus in 1817
Right, from top The court painter Fausto Zonaro's house in Akaretler; his painting of the view in snow from his studio; looking up Akaretler today



Abdülaziz's new street

Built in 1867 for members of the palace household, Akaretler is two elegant curved streets that meet at the bottom of the hill in Beşiktaş. One climbs all the way to Maçka, the other leads inland to Abdülmecid's Linden Pavilion. The houses were also designed to provide income for the new Aziziye Mosque (abandoned after Abdülaziz was deposed in 1876), and, it is said, to shield Dolmabahçe from the risk of fire spreading from Beşiktaş. The court painter Fausto Zonaro lived in the corner building (above), now the W Hotel, and painted a snowy view of the Dolmabahçe Palace kitchens from his studio (right). Neglected until a few years ago, the newly restored buildings (below) now house galleries, shops and restaurants.



THE ZONARO FAMILY ARCHIVE

BRIAN MCKEE

Nişantaşı

A SHOPPER'S SWISH LIST

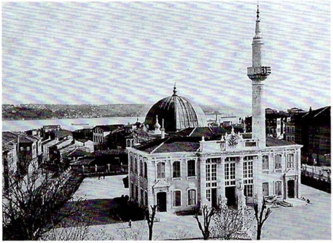
Nişantaşı is a retail golden triangle. Swing left for high-end fashion, smart restaurants and five-star luxury – or right for very different offerings

Approaching Nişantaşı from Taksim, you pass the 1930s Radio House and the Hilton Hotel (the first in Europe) before reaching Harbiye, where the wide avenue Cumhuriyet Caddesi divides in two, geographically and stylistically.

Halaskârgazi Caddesi is one long, congested Oxford Street, but with more cafés and pudding shops. It is bordered by a huge rag-trade district and by the old-fashioned areas of Kurtuluş, boasting the best charcuteries, bakers and offal shops, and Bomonti, home to an organic market on Saturdays and an antiques market on Sundays.

Valikonağı Caddesi leads into a far more elegant world. The closer it comes to the American Hospital, the more abundant the patisseries, chocolatiers, shoe shops, jewellers and florists.

At the corner of Valikonağı and Teşvikiye Caddesi, **Yargıcı** offers chic, affordable garments for the young and beautiful at heart. The obelisk at the crossroads, the *nışan taşı* (commemorative stone), gives the area its name. Rumeli Caddesi, the quarter's congested high street, heads left to the area of Osmanbey. Teşvikiye Caddesi heads right, to the Teşvikiye Mosque, past **City's**, an intrusive shopping centre. Much more Nişantaşı in character is the modest **Hak Pasajı**, immediately on your left at No 22, which cuts through to Akkavak Sokağı. All Nişantaşı meets in this unpromising, neon-lit passage: tailors, jewellers, a good cobbler. Here is **Moiz** the Francophone haberdasher. Here, too, is a friendly stationer's, selling the Saatli Maarif Takvimi, the calendar that predicts an entire year's weather, not to mention Istanbul's favourite auctioneer of antique books and postcards, **Burak Pul Evi**, and, downstairs, **Orlando Carlo Calumeno**'s amazing shop of museum-quality ephemera, all crowded into dozens of little vitrines.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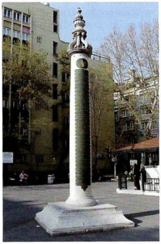
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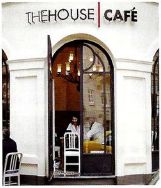

JÜRGEN FRANK

ORLANDO CARLO CALUMENO
COLLECTION & ARCHIVES

Top left The Teşvikiye Mosque
Top right A column celebrates a spectacularly accurate rifle shot in 1811 by Mahmud II
Above The mosque timekeeper's office is now The House Café
Left Sign of an antiques dealer in the Hak Pasajı

The modern town that has grown up around the **Teşvikiye Mosque**, rebuilt by Abdülhamid in 1891, was the brainchild of his father, Abdülmecid I, builder of Dolmabahçe Palace, who encouraged the upper classes to move here and gave the quarter its name, Teşvikiye (Incentive). The two standing stones in the mosque courtyard celebrate shots fired well and true by Abdülmecid's great-uncle Selim III in 1791, and his father, Mahmud II, who in 1811 shattered a pot with a rifle shot from a full 805 metres on what was then open hillside.

Here in the later 19th century the pashas built gargantuan konaks in large gardens. Next they embarked on grand, high-ceilinged apartment blocks: the Tozan, the Rally and the Teşvikiye Palas are among the finest examples of early-1900s civil architecture. The Art Deco **Maçka Palas** is now the **Park Hyatt Hotel**, with **Gucci** (Maçka Cad 33) on the ground floor. It was built by Giulio Mongeri for an Italian engineer-turned-merchant who made his fortune in railways. He planned to let the 64 flats to diplomats from the Italian Embassy opposite. The embassy building – a fabulous white elephant built just as the new Turkish Republic moved the capital to Ankara in 1923 – is now a school. All sorts of interesting people ended up living in the Maçka Palas, including the most Parisian of Turkish poets, Abdülhak Hamit Tarhan, with his beautiful wife, Lucienne. The Maçka Palas has since been rebuilt, preserving the façade.

Next door is the Orientalist **İzmir Palas** with its pointy-arched, tiled carriage entrance, domed viewing tower and formal garden screened by a giant wistaria. It is the most completely preserved of the palazzos, down to its creaking parquet floors.

The branch of **The House Café** that nestles in the timekeeper's office of the mosque is a useful place to meet, but those in the know slip down Atiye Sokağı opposite, where a raised ground-floor apartment houses the progenitor of this Istanbul chain (No 10/1), more club than café, with a communal table and a large, leafy garden.

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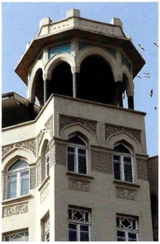
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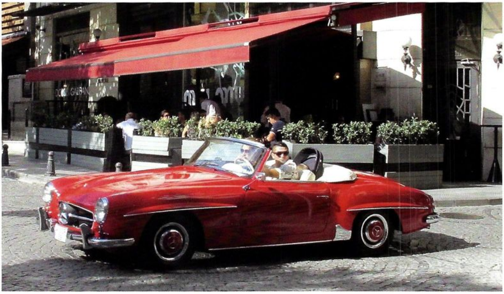
Now that Atiye Sokağı is closed to traffic, wine bars have taken over the street. **Gönül Paksoy**, a designer of dresses, shoes and hats in exquisite vegetable-dyed materials, presides from her shop window (No 1). Opposite her is **Nord et Sud** (No 12/2), full of attractive lanterns, frames and household objects in Nordic and Provençal styles. Jewellery designers, too, are drawn into the Paksoy orbit.

Brand-name bonanza

Atiye Sokağı ends in Abdi İpekçi Caddesi, home to **Louis Vuitton** (No 23/2) and **Beymen** (No 23/1). Downstairs at Metin Fadıllıoğlu's popular **Brasserie**, a distinctly senatorial class can enjoy the best tables for viewing the best-dressed – though when Nişantaşı does chic, it is pretty relaxed about it, at least by day. Next to Beymen is **Armaggan's** Turkish design extravaganza (Bostan Sok 8).

Abdi İpekçi is a galaxy of brand names. You have to take your hat off to the local council for turning an ugly street into something so chichi. **Alexander McQueen** (No 21), **Tiffany** (No 53), **Chanel** (No 65), **Hermès** (No 79) and many others, including **Machka** (No 44/2) with its Dice Kayek designs, occupy the lower stretches, while all the watches of Geneva are paraded liberally

ABOVE THE ITALIAN EMBASSY ON MAÇKA CADDESİ, ABANDONED UNFINISHED IN 1921 WHEN THE CAPITAL MOVED TO ANKARA, IS NOW A SCHOOL
ABOVE LEFT THE ARCHITECT VEDAT TEK'S HOUSE ON VALİKONAĞI CADDESİ
LEFT STORKS CIRCLE ABOVE THE CANOPIED LOOKOUT OF THE TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY İZMİR PALAS APARTMENTS
FAR LEFT THE TEŞVİKİYE PALAS APARTMENTS
BELOW ZIPPING PAST BRASSERIE IN CHIC ABDİ İPEKÇİ CADDESİ


JOHN SCOTT

BRIAN MCKEE

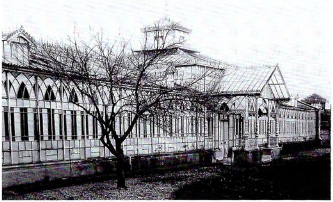
throughout, but particularly at the top. Halfway down is **The House Hotel** (No 34), just above **Prada**, a good place to drop your bags and drink a coffee in the privacy of the first-floor clubroom-cum-library. Smart cafés and restaurants line the broad pavement below, with cars easing past the balloon wine glasses and *insalata mista*.

In September, the new glass-and-steel **St Regis Hotel** opens on the site of the brutalist Seventies Maçka Hotel – with the same fine views of the park.

Where the art is

Nişantaşı has inevitably attracted the contemporary art scene, and the **Contemporary Istanbul** art fair in November makes a terrific buzz at the **Lütfi Kırdar Convention Centre** (by Maçka Park). Abdi İpekçi has three good galleries, though you could easily miss these white cubes hidden within apartment buildings.

Start with **Dirimart** (No 7/4), whose conventional look contrasts with the important experimental works on its walls. **Kare** (No 22/8) primarily showcased post-1960 Turkish abstract artists when it opened in the 1990s, but now also supports emerging artists. **X-ist** (No 42/2) is *the* place to find new young artists. In a modest passage under the smooth granite Millî Reasürans complex, the art bookshop **Patika** is worth a browse. Upstairs, slip past myriad sophisticated bars all the way to Maçka Caddesi. Here, unmarked under İşbank, is a door to a staircase down to the **Millî Reasürans Art Gallery**, a not-for-profit art space with



ISTANBUL UNIVERSITY YILDIZ ALBUMS

TOP ROW NİŞANTAŞI PANORAMA; A BOUTIQUE ON IHLAMUR YOLU CENTRE THE ORANGERIE OF ŞADİYE SULTAN'S LONG-VANISHED PALACE ON VALİKONAĞI LEFT OTTOMAN GLAMOUR: MIHRIMAH SULTAN WAS BORN IN ISTANBUL IN 1922 ABOVE CLASSICAL CANDLE AT TAY MUM OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT RİFAT ÖZBEK'S YASTIK: TWO OF HIS CUSHIONS; SMART LEATHER AT DERIMOD; ELEMENTS' STYLISH LIGHTS; TABLE AND CHAIRS AT AUTOBAN

BERRIN TOROLSAN

FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

JÜRGEN FRANK

over 150 shows – often with an architectural theme – under its belt since it opened in 1994.

For classical Turkish art, step into Mim Kemal Öke Caddesi, parallel to Abdi İpekçi, where **Güneş Öztarakçı** (No 5) offers kilims and rugs in a distinctly unbazaary setting. Istanbul's two big auction houses, **Alif Art** and **Portakal,** have pre-sale viewings here: Alif Art at the **Chalabi Art Gallery** (No 17), Portakal in the Art Deco Gün Apartments (No 8). Both offer contemporary art between sales. Nearby is **Patek Philippe** (No 13), who was selling Ottoman-style Swiss watches to the Ottomans 150 years ago.

Among elegant places to eat, **Delicatessen** (No 19) is a young brasserie where 30 is, well, old. **Hünkar** (No 21) offers Turkish

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classics, and **Park Şamdan** (No 18) at the bottom of the street is old-fashioned international. Across the park, under the Lütfi Kırdar Convention Centre, **Borsa** has a huge terrace with the feel of a Thirties transatlantic liner. A stately baked lamb (*kuzu tandır*) with a robust red wine will see you through a classical or jazz concert upstairs or in the **Cemal Reşit Rey** concert hall next door (buy tickets at biletix.com).

Weird and wonderful

At the top of Mim Kemal, go left for the old-fashioned **Military Museum**, with its Ottoman tents hidden away upstairs, and a stirring afternoon Janissary band recital, or cross Valikonağı, passing the spectacular blue-tiled Ottoman Revival house that the chief imperial architect, Vedat Tek, built for himself in 1913 (with **Yekta**, Nişantaşı's oldest restaurant, at street level).

Head up Süleyman Nazif Sokağı – which has the largest wooden apartment block left in the city and Modernist corner apartments – to narrow Zafer Sokağı, running parallel to Valikonağı and a shortcut to the Osmanbey metro. **Berze** (No 23) is an antique shop full of surprises. **Artisan** (No 5) makes gowns and wedding dresses using Ottoman- and Indian-inspired materials of a splendour fit for Elizabeth I.

From here you might like to cross Halaskârgazi to Kurtuluş, with its cobblers, picture framers, delicatessens, and **Astek** (at the top of Bilezikçi Sok), a meyhane picked by Cornucopia as one of the best. Beyond Kurtuluş is the Protestant cemetery of Feriköy, and Bomonti, where weird new towers have sprung up behind the old brewery. Its weekend markets are worth a visit. Come on Saturday for organic food (from dawn till about 3pm). Sunday is the day for antiques (9am till 6pm).

Chic by jowl

Retrace your steps along Zafer Sokağı, turn right onto Rumeli Caddesi and continue along Teşvikiye Caddesi, past the corner newsagent (central to Orhan Pamuk's *Black Book*) and the pudding shop **Saray**. Behind the mosque on the left and farther down the hill you will find an until-recently dull area that is chic and shabby by turns – hardware and grocery stores stand side by side with new (and old) designers and galleries, in the dust kicked up by an endless, needless recycling of apartment blocks.

At the top of Süreyya Ağaoğlu Sokağı, which runs from the mosque down to Ihlamur Kasrı, **Puhu Sanat** (No 3) is the best shop in town for artists' materials. At Şakayık Sokağı 13, one road down, the gorgeous cushions in Rifat Özbek's **Yastık** are a feast for the eye. For good nosh, drop into **Mutfak**, round the corner at Osman Fahir Seden Sokağı 11. The owner, Songül Tali, who serves up delicious, simple dishes aided by three dashing sons, was cook to the granddaughter of the last caliph. Next door is a wine shop stocking the best hard-to-find Turkish wines, and **Artium** (No 9), auctioneers specialising in good late-19th-century and early Modern Turkish painters. Opposite, in **Düğme** (Button), at No 14/1, two skilful ladies produce soft toys and children's clothing, while down treacherous steps is **Evren Kayar** (No 14), who creates necklaces in coral and quartz – each a daring work of art.

At **Osmanlı Koleksiyon** (Şakayık Sok 5), opposite the new purist coffee shop **MOC** (No 4), Ruhi Okuş stacks up books bought from Nişantaşı's

BERRIN TOROLSAN

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BERRIN TOROLSAN

intellectuals among broken cameras and pretty porcelain. In quiet moments he nurses injured street animals and teaches people to read Ottoman script.

If it's time to eat, at the top of Akkavak Sokağı are the busiest restaurants: chic, real places, such as Şemsa Denizel's gourmet **Kantin** (No 30); **Tatbak** (No 28) for the fastest chicken shish and bulghur and tasty *lahmacun* wraps; and the pudding shop **Zeynel** (No 11) for *tavukgözü* (milky chicken-breast pudding) and other sweet delights.

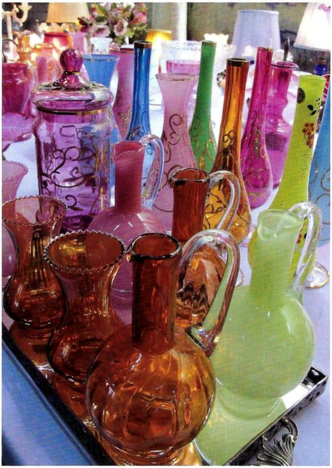
In the small park between Şakayık and Akkavak, cats, society dogs and their owners socialise. Women hold a bazaar here every Thursday, and short queues form for dolmuşes to Eminönü for the Old City (hop off at Kabataş and take the tram), and to Kadıköy across the Bosphorus. In **Tunaman Çarşısı**, below the multistorey car park by the park, once the site of Halil Rifat Pasha's palace, **Mudo Concept** is a huge and eclectic furniture store. **Ahmet Kaleli**, next door, makes sofas to order.

One street along from Şakayık, at Prof Dr Orhan Ersek Sokağı 9, see sculpted sconces designed for spacious interiors at **Elements**. At No 8, **Lâlâ** makes beautiful children's party dresses. At the bottom of the hill is the long-established modern art gallery **TEM** (No 14).

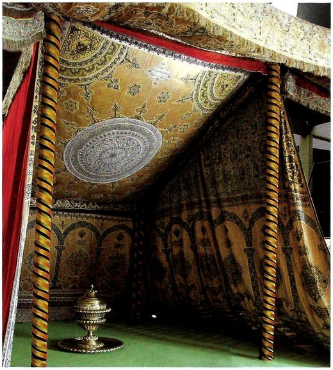
From here Ihlamur Yolu leads down to the **Ihlamur Kasrı**. Near the bottom, vertiginous stairs speed the descent. A more leisurely zigzag road takes you past a Nişantaşı favourite, **Tay Mum** (No 84), producing inventive candles for 40 years.

Alternatively, stroll towards the Bosphorus from the Teşvikiye Mosque. The road skirting leafy Maçka Park leads eventually to the panoramic **Swissôtel**. After D'Aronco's strange Art Nouveau fountain and Abdülaziz's crumbling barracks (a university since 1950), turn left at the old cemetery into Süleyman Seba Caddesi for Akaretler and the boat stations of Beşiktaş. The art gallery **Kuad** is at No 52. If you're into retro furniture, **Autoban** (No 16) offers more retail therapy at the bottom of the hill. ◆

ARKATÜR
Karikatür
Şaka
Mizah
ALLAHA EMANET

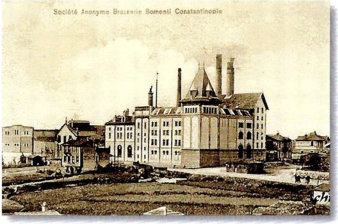


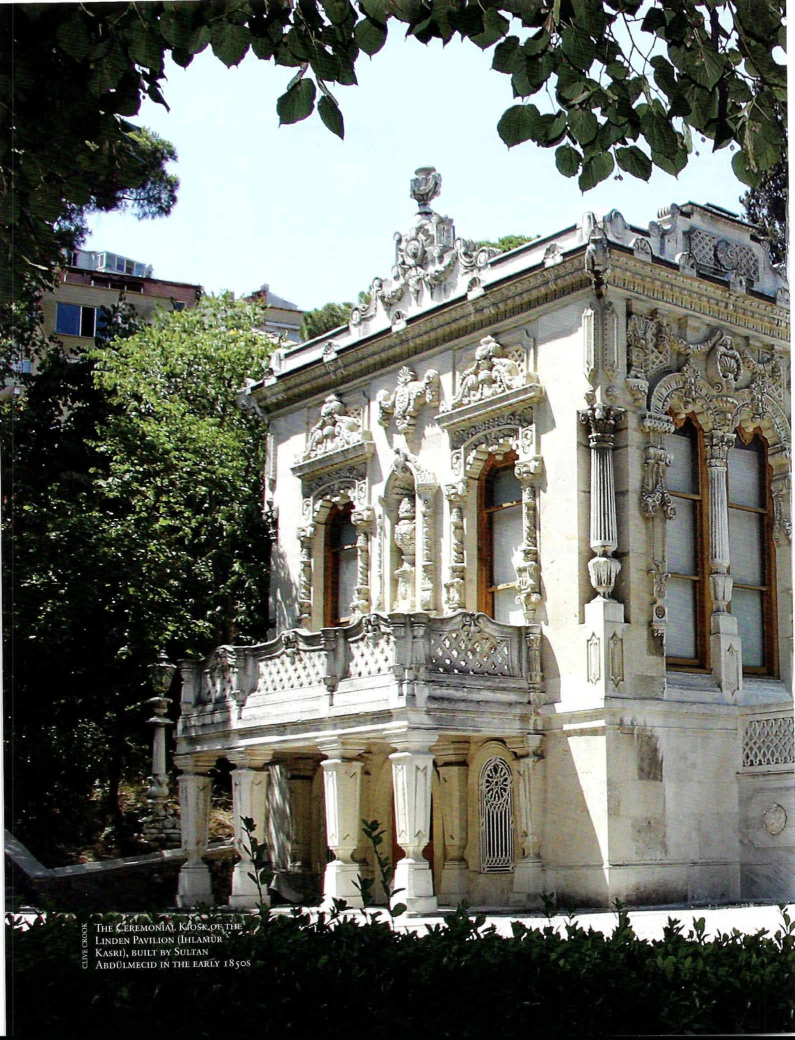
BERRIN TOROLSAN



FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

Opposite, clockwise from top left The House Hotel on Abdi İpekçi Caddesi; Lâlâ's party frocks; D'Aronco's fountain in Maçka Park; smiles at Mutfak Above left and above Politics and Bohemian glass at the Bomonti antiques market Left 18th-century Ottoman tent at the Military Museum Below The Bomonti Brewery





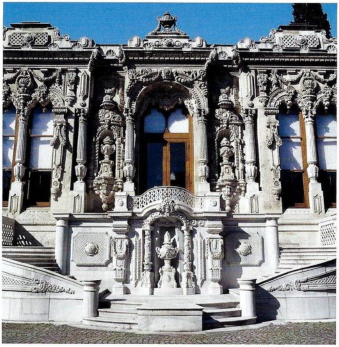
CLIVE CROOK

The Ceremonial Kiosk of the Linden Pavilion (Ihlamur Kasri), built by Sultan Abdülmecid in the early 1850s

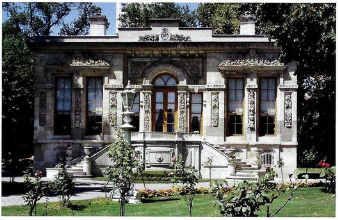
The Linden Pavilion

A FRAGRANT CONTRADICTION

In the very thick of the city, with its fret and fuss, belching traffic and urban sprawl, lies a glade scented with linden blossoms. Here the young Sultan Abdülmecid built a jewel of a palace, grand but tiny, which is still a green oasis and place of escape. By Berrin Torolsan



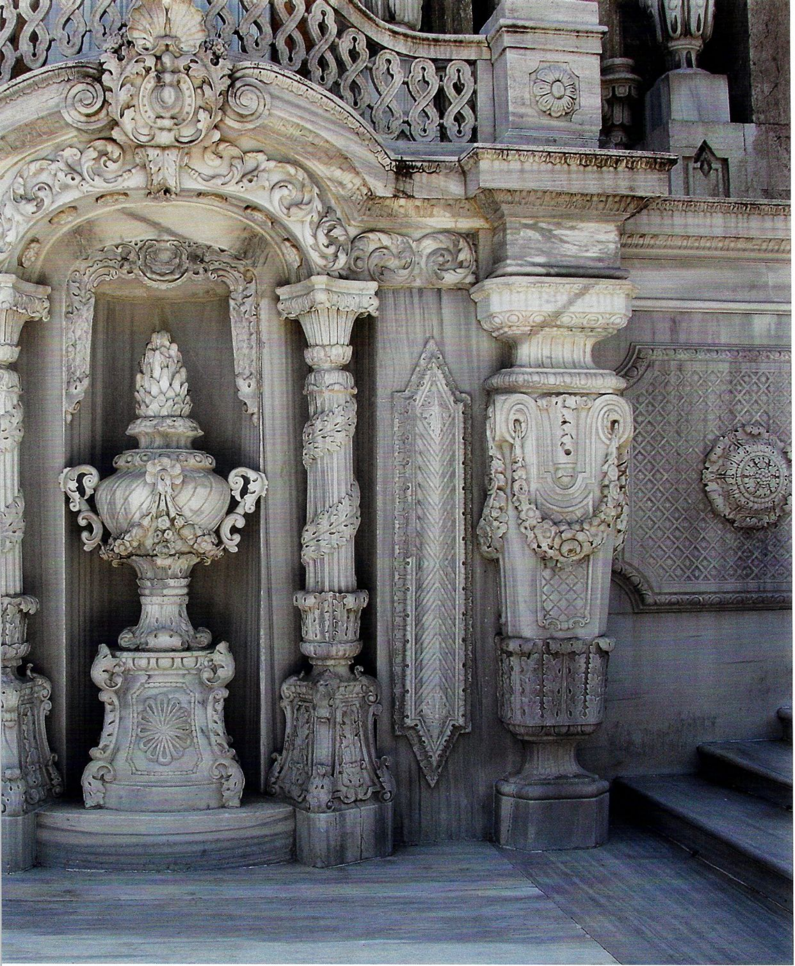
FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG



CLIVE CROOK

CLIVE CROOK

IHLAMUR, ABDÜLMECİD I'S 'MAISON DE PLAISANCE'. THE SULTAN, A PROLIFIC BUILDER, WAS ESPECIALLY FOND OF THIS MINIATURE PALACE AND WOULD SPEND HIS LAST DAYS IN THE CLEAN AIR HERE. AS HE LAY DYING IN THE RETINUE KIOSK (ABOVE), HE COULD GAZE ACROSS THE PARK TO THE FANCIFUL CEREMONIAL KIOSK (TOP AND RIGHT). WHEN HE WAS IN GOOD HEALTH, HE WOULD RIDE HERE ON HORSEBACK AND IN THE EVENING CANTER ROUND HIS NEW CITY INSPECTING HIS MANY PROJECTS. AN AVENUE OF PLANE TREES LED TO DOLMABAHÇE PALACE ON THE SEASHORE, ANOTHER OF HIS CREATIONS



Hidden from the hillsides of concrete that line the valley of the Fulya river, the walled garden of the Ihlamur Kasrı – the Linden Pavilion – is an oasis. At the beginning of June, the magic is all the stronger: the heady fragrance of the linden trees lifts you into another world. These are broad-leaved limes (*Tilia platyphyllos*), said to be the most scented variety. Sadly, many were felled when the old garden walls were torn down a few years ago.

The young Abdülmecid I loved the tranquillity of this spot, and it is here that he received the Turcophile French writer, poet and politician Alphonse de Lamartine in 1849, after his failed bid for the presidency of France against Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte. The Frenchman was surprised to be entertained by the glamorous young sultan in what was at that time a modest farmhouse. Abdülmecid granted him an estate on the Aegean where he could spend the rest of his life. But Lamartine returned to France to sort out his affairs, and died in Paris years later, too poor to go into exile. The estate reverted to the Ottoman treasury.

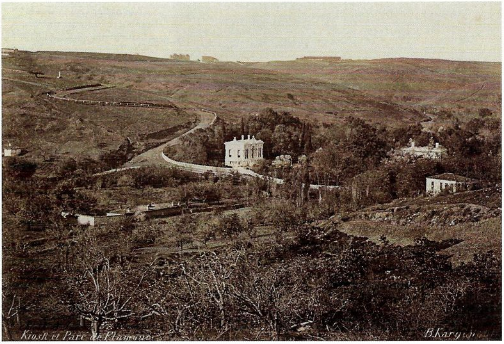
A progressive thinker who opposed slavery and the death penalty and was lionised for his heroic stand against tyranny, Lamartine was passionate about Turkey. "If one had but a single glance to give the world," he wrote, "one should gaze on Stamboul." Abdülmecid, for his part, spoke fluent French, was highly educated, one of the best calligraphers of his time and fond of Western literature and music. David Wilkie painted a portrait of him for Queen Victoria upon his succession at 16, and noted his enthusiasm for art. In 1847, Liszt was one of many composers welcomed to his court.

The sultan had begun a building spree that included Dolmabahçe Palace on the Bosphorus, a palace opera house and numerous public buildings – hospitals, schools, the first Western-style university, mosques, barracks, clock towers and the first railway: cornerstones of a Europeanised Ottoman world. Now, in his favourite linden park, he would order a twin-pavilioned *maison de plaisance*, of the sort popular in the 19th century among royalty keen to escape the stultifying formality of their palaces.

Set back from the entrance, veiled by magnolias and ginkgo trees, the Merasim Köşkü, or Ceremonial Kiosk, is the focus of the Ihlamur Kasrı. An elegant pond reflects the garlands, acanthus leaves, festoons, scrolls and urns that adorn the sandstone façade. Marmara marble is used for

Interior photographs by Fritz von der Schulenburg

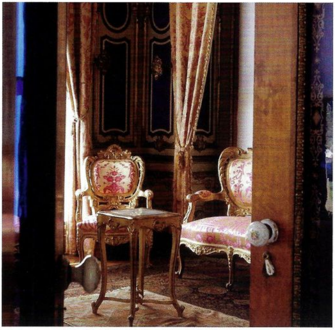
Left Entering Ihlamur's Ceremonial Pavilion is like stepping into a jewel box. Doors set with sapphire-blue crystal panes lead off the domed entrance hall into a quietly decorated anteroom on one side and a deliciously pompous reception room on the other, seen here. The crystal mirrors create intriguing vistas

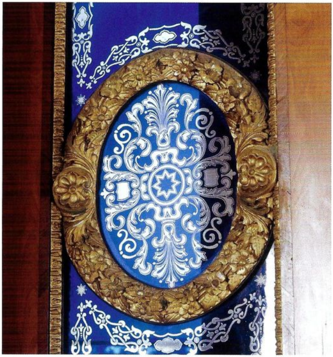


Right Ihlamur as it looked in the 1870s. The two white kiosks in their walled park are surrounded by the still empty Fulya Deresi (Narcissus Valley). The modest farmhouse on the right is where Sultan Abdülmecid had a meeting with the French poet Lamartine in 1849, before he built the palace. A road climbs the hill to the embryonic district of Teşvikiye on the skyline

BURAK ÇETINTAŞ ARCHIVE

Opposite The reception room viewed from the hall, with mirrors giving an illusion of infinity. Magnificent wall panels imitate lapis lazuli, dusted and veined with 24-carat gold
Below The partially gilded Louis XV-style chairs in the reception room have been restored with gold and rose silk covers, replicas of the originals specially woven in Hereke. In the 1990s, experts took care to preserve the atmosphere of the pavilion, replacing fabrics only when necessary. Recent work has been more heavy-handed
Bottom A gilded garland mount on the sapphire-glazed doors off the hallway





the fluted columns and trellised balustrades of the horseshoe staircase. "The stairs are always the delight of a Balyan palace," declared Godfrey Goodwin, the late doyen of Ottoman architectural history – and this building is in fact one of the best examples of the Balyan style.

The architect, Nikoğos Balyan, belonged to a dynasty of Istanbul-born architects and contractors responsible for many imperial buildings. Trained in Paris, he was inspired by Rococo and Neoclassical architecture, everything in fact from Lebrun's Versailles to Garnier's Paris Opéra. He used his French Baroque and Rococo vocabulary with playfulness and an almost Oriental wit. Had the ageing Alphonse de Lamartine made it back to this place, he would have been reminded of home.

Inside Ihlamur, Balyan, and probably his designers – Charles Séchan of Paris, who was in Istanbul to decorate the theatre at Dolmabahçe, and William Gibbs Rogers of London, who furnished the palace – let their imagination take wing. The Ceremonial Kiosk is a neat rectangular prism. Three rooms of identical width line up along the front: an entrance hall in the centre, with an anteroom to the right and a reception room to the left, both of which lead out to terraces.

Behind the anteroom is a washroom with an exuberant marble basin, and stairs leading down to where guards and servants presumably waited. The walls are in beautifully executed faux marbling, with the exception of the reception room, whose lapis lazuli effect has lost none of its lustre after 160 years. The gilded pediments, rosettes, overdoors, stuccoed shells, swags, baskets

Left A Baroque marble-topped giltwood and gesso table and fine gilded cane chairs stand at the centre of the reception room. The fireplace has porcelain surrounds and fine sculpted gilt-bronze mounts from England. The elaborately swagged curtains are original and gently fading

of fruit and garlands of flowers lavished on the cornices and ceilings entwine around the flower still lifes in more gentle, subdued colours.

Moss roses, wallflowers, violets, sweet peas, irises and tulips – all no doubt grown in the garden – repeat in the porcelain surrounds of the three fireplaces and in the doorknobs. When the sun pours in through the French windows, it hits the sapphire-coloured Venetian-glass doors, setting the jewel-like splendour alight. Tall crystal mirrors create theatrical optical illusions to left and right. A cupola crowns the hall; a powerful barrel vault spans the reception room. All this in a building that could easily fit into many a Paris drawing room.

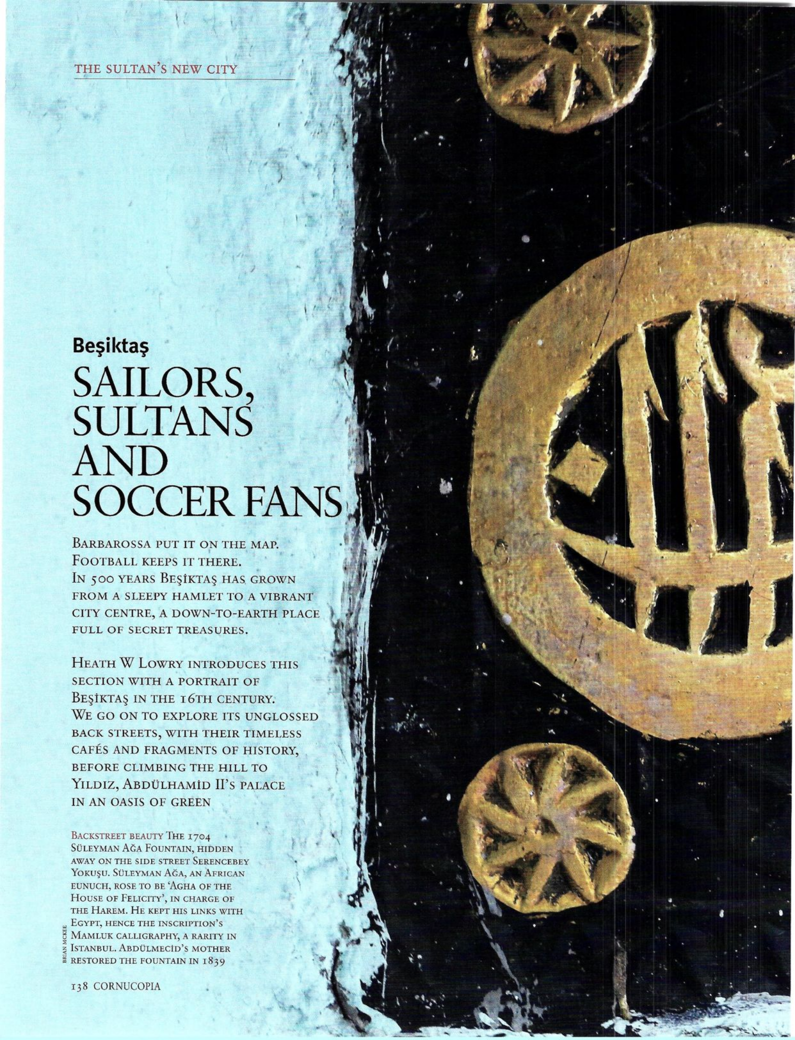
This exercise in illusion is certainly Baroque in feeling, but it is classical in proportion – an exquisite conceit, as formal and festive as an aria from Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*, of which the young sultan was so fond.

The second, more restrained building, the Maiyet Köşkü, or Retinue Kiosk, had the perfect view of this Baroque pearl. Its plan is in the Ottoman tradition – four square rooms in the four corners, leading off a central hall or *sofa*. It was here, on June 25, 1861, that Abdülmecid, reformer and patron of the arts, died of tuberculosis at the age of 38, just after the linden blossoms had passed. ◆

Ihlamur Kasrı is open daily except Monday and Thursday, 9.30am–5pm; +90-212 236 9000; millisaraylar.gov.tr.
There is no easy public transport, so take a taxi or walk 10 minutes downhill from Nişantaşı, or 15 minutes inland from Beşiktaş

Below Ormolu chandeliers have gas taps disguised as foliage. The fine gesso-work carving is thought to be by William Gibbs Rogers, who was commissioned to produce carved drapes and trophies for Dolmabahçe in 1856

Bottom A scallop basin of solid Marmara marble with an elaborate fountain back



Beşiktaş

SAILORS, SULTANS AND SOCCER FANS

Barbarossa put it on the map. Football keeps it there. In 500 years Beşiktaş has grown from a sleepy hamlet to a vibrant city centre, a down-to-earth place full of secret treasures.

Heath W Lowry introduces this section with a portrait of Beşiktaş in the 16th century. We go on to explore its unglossed back streets, with their timeless cafés and fragments of history, before climbing the hill to Yildiz, Abdülhamid II's palace in an oasis of green

Backstreet beauty The 1704 Süleyman Ağa Fountain, hidden away on the side street Serencebey Yokuşu. Süleyman Ağa, an African eunuch, rose to be 'Agha of the House of Felicity', in charge of the Harem. He kept his links with Egypt, hence the inscription's Mamluk calligraphy, a rarity in Istanbul. Abdülmecid's mother restored the fountain in 1839

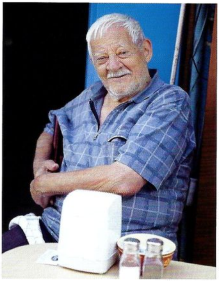
BRIAN MCKEE

THE FOUNDING FATHERS

Heath W Lowry tells the story of the birth of Ottoman Beşiktaş and the men who made it happen

While I have never actually lived in Beşiktaş, I have worked there, both at the beginning of my career in the 1970s and now, following my retirement. Today, finding myself back in the neighbourhood, writing in an office overlooking the Bosphorus, in a strange sort of way I feel I've returned home.

Whether it is my weekly visit to the octogenarian Bulgar Pando's hole-in-the wall restaurant for a breakfast of fresh eggs accompanied by heavy cream and honey, and bread fresh from the oven, served with steaming-hot sweetened milk, or my thrice-weekly visit to my barber of 40 years for a shave and shampoo, I am clearly walking on familiar ground. As it is for most residents, the centre of the neighbourhood is the bustling *çarşı* (marketplace), with its fish market and countless shops and restaurants seemingly designed solely for the purpose of meeting any and all of my needs.



FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

Beşiktaş, home nowadays to over 200,000 inhabitants, is best known for its partisans' fierce loyalty to their football team. Aside from its Bosphorus shoreline, little has changed here in the past 40 years. As for its waterfront, its once crumbling warehouses and burnt-out shells of palaces have given way to luxury hotels – the Çırağan, the Four Seasons and the Shangri-La – the sprawling campus of Bahçeşehir University, the new Naval Museum and the Istanbul offices of the prime minister. In a strange way it is almost as if none of these new arrivals, while physically located in Beşiktaş, is really part of the neighbourhood. They face the Bosphorus and, in so doing, it is almost as if they have turned their backs on the city itself.

Prior to the mid-16th century the tiny village of Beşiktaş was little more than home to a scattering of Greek and Armenian Christian peasants whose job it was to tend the gardens that graced its slopes above the Bosphorus. These gardens were famous for the fruits and vegetables with which they supplied the inhabitants of Istanbul.

The events that transformed this sleepy village into an integral part of the burgeoning metropolis are closely associated with four individuals, two of whom settled here (the naval commander Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha and the Muslim mystic Yahya Efendi), while the third, another naval commander, Sinan Pasha, established a large pious endowment in the quarter, and the fourth, the imperial architect Mimar Sinan, designed the *türbes* (mausoleums) of Barbaros and Yahya Efendi and the Sinan Pasha Mosque.

One thing Beşiktaş is not generally associated with is being home to three great Ottoman architectural monuments. That said, these still grace the quarter, providing the essence of its Ottoman character. Indeed, it is possible to trace the emergence of the town through the lives of their endowers, each of whom must be credited as one of Beşiktaş's founding fathers.

Left Bulgar Pando, king of clotted cream and honey, in his Beşiktaş café
Top Looking down the new Barbaros Boulevard to the square in the 1950s
Right The corsair and commander Barbarossa by Cristofano dell' Altissimo
Opposite His mausoleum is centrally located but rarely open

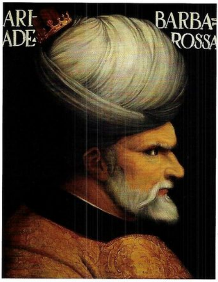
Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha

The first to arrive was the great 16th-century Mediterranean corsair turned Ottoman high admiral (*kapudan-ı derya*) Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha, conqueror of Algiers and Tunis.

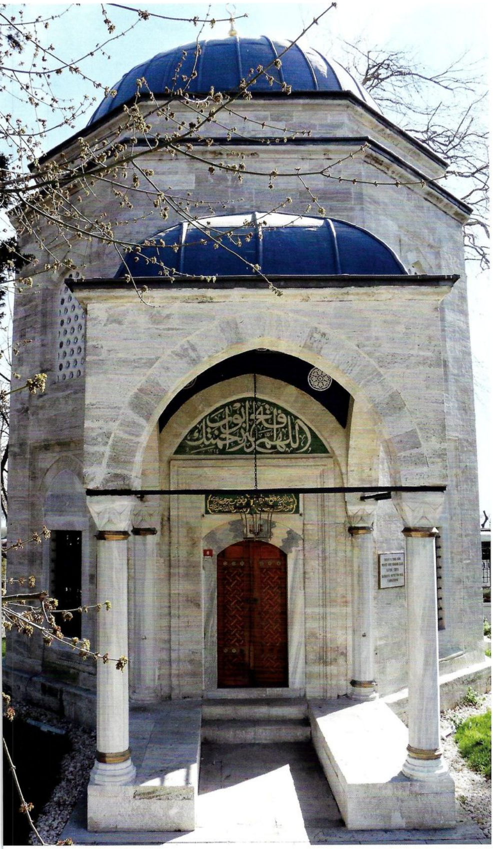
In his biography, the *Gazavât-ı Hayreddin Paşa* (a work commissioned by Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent), he is described as the third of four sons born to a Turkish cavalryman (*sipahi*) named Ya'kub, who had been a member of the Ottoman garrison settled on the island of Mytilene (Lesbos) following its conquest in 1462, and a Christian mother, a certain Catalina, or Katerina, referred to in Western sources as the widow of a Greek priest. Named Hızır at birth, he would later become known by the nickname "Barbarossa" (Red Beard), by Westerners, and by the honorific Hayreddin by the Ottomans. His mixed lineage was the result of a common practice in the Ottoman Empire, namely the union of Ottoman troops and local Christian girls in the regions they conquered.

Barbaros settled in the village of Beşiktaş and over time built two large mansions on the site which today houses the Naval Museum. He commissioned the imperial architect Sinan to build his mausoleum next to them, in what at that time was called the Deve Meydanı (Camel Square).

While his konaks (mansions) are long since gone, as is the medrese (seminary) he endowed nearby, his mausoleum at the foot of today's Barbaros Boulevard still stands as a memorial to the individual who was the real founder of the town. Indeed, it has recently been restored, and were it not for the fact that it is seldom open, it would undoubtedly be one of the area's most-



UFFIZI MUSEUM/BRIDGEMAN



BRIAN MCKEE

visited tourist sites. The locked fence that surrounds it has a sign informing the would-be visitor that it is open from 12 noon to 2pm on Fridays, but since its refurbishment it has remained closed even then.

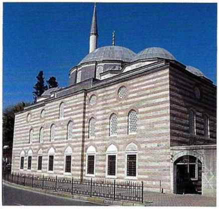
That this is not a recent development may be inferred from the memoirs of the 19th-century British naval captain Adolphus Slade, who during his time in Istanbul in the 1830s visited Beşiktaş on numerous occasions in search of the tomb of the man he called the Ottoman Nelson. Describing his last, successful, attempt, he wrote: "At length, an elderly man of the law satisfied my desire; he had observed me before, and in my last visit, with another gentleman, broke through habitual indifference, and came to know our object. We told him, on which he sent a boy for the key, which, from the time it required to be found, and the difficulty in turning the rusty wards of the lock, appeared to be seldom used, and introduced us to the last dwelling of Andrew [Andrea] Doria's antagonist."

Slade, who himself later became an admiral in the Ottoman navy, described the interior of the mausoleum thus: "It was simple, in accordance with Oriental taste in such matters; the floor was covered with an Indian mat, on which rested two coffins, one of which was nine feet long, and proportionately wide. At the head of it was Barbarossa's *caouk* [*kavuk*, or quilted turban] and above it hung his particular banner [*sancak*]. The other contained his *chiaja* [*kahya*, or major-domo]."

Since Slade's visit the number of inhabitants residing in the mausoleum has grown. They now include (according to their labels) Cafer Pasha, an early-17th-century *kapudan-ı derya* (high admiral); Hızır Hayreddin Pasha himself; Hasan Pasha, son of Hayreddin, and one-time beylerbeyi of Algiers; and Bala Hatun, wife of Hayreddin. How and when the remains of Cafer Pasha, Hasan Pasha and Bala Hatun (an otherwise unknown wife of Hayreddin) found their way there is an unresolved question. As for the present whereabouts of the majordomo who lay next to Barbaros at the time of Slade's visit, that too remains a mystery.

Sinan Pasha

When the well-known figure of Hayreddin Barbaros started building in the village of Beşiktaş, he set a fashion followed by many of his successors as commanders of the Ottoman fleet, including Sinan Pasha, who commanded the Ottoman navy from 1550 until his death in 1553. Although he never, to our knowledge, actually lived there, unlike Barbaros, his name is linked with the final phase of Beşiktaş's transformation from village to city. Sinan Pasha's career in


HEATH W LOWRY

life, and his legacy in death, were closely associated with his far-better-known elder brother, the grand vizier and son-in-law of Sultan Süleyman, Rüstem Pasha.

Before his death, Sinan Pasha commissioned the architect Mimar Sinan to build the mosque that still stands at the heart of Beşiktaş today. It was designed as the centrepiece of a complex of pious endowments. Following his death, he was buried in the courtyard of his sister-in-law Mihrimah Sultan's mosque across the water in Üsküdar, and the complex he had commissioned in Beşiktaş was built by his brother Rüstem. It was this endowment, financed by an individual with no known attachment to Beşiktaş, that resulted in its transformation from sleepy village into bustling Ottoman metropolis.

His Friday mosque is still standing, as are many of Sinan Pasha's other endowments – the medrese, primary school, Nakşibendi dervish lodge and soup kitchen, a second neighbourhood house of prayer, a hamam, 58 shops, 51 rental rooms for bachelors, a bakery and butcher's shop (all of whose incomes were earmarked for the upkeep of the mosque and schools). As well as two bridges and an aqueduct to meet the water needs of mosque and hamam, these all became the nucleus around which the 16th-century town emerged, and remains to this day.

Yahya Efendi

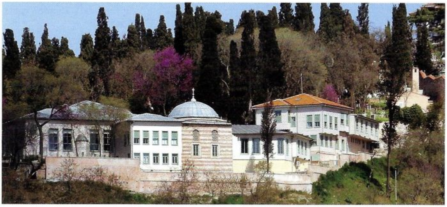
If the two admirals Hayreddin Barbaros and Sinan Pasha were responsible for building Ottoman Beşiktaş, it was the third founding father, Yahya Efendi, who created its spiritual centre.

Yahya was born in the Black Sea city of Trabzon during the closing decade of the 15th century, the son of Amasyalı Ömer Efendi, the city's *müftü* (legal expert) when Şehzâde (Prince) Selim was provincial governor. These two individuals, one embodying the secular, the other the religious authority of the state, represented Ottoman power in Trabzon.

Whatever relationship existed between them must have been strengthened when Ömer Efendi's wife gave birth to a son weeks or months before Selim's wife gave birth to Prince Süleyman. For it was to the wife of Ömer Efendi, mother of the new born Yahya, that Süleyman's mother turned when she needed a wet nurse for the infant prince. With this action Süleyman and Yahya became *süt karındaşları* (milk brothers).

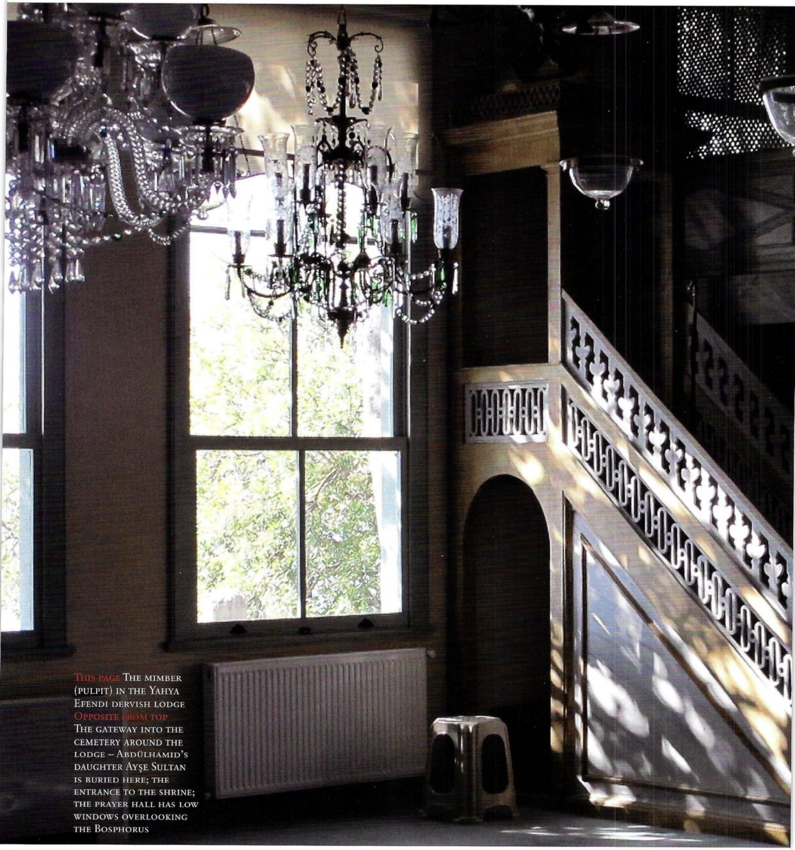
Thus began a lifelong bond; one would emerge as the Ottoman ruler, Süleyman the Magnificent, while the other became a well-known mystic, whose tomb in the hills above Beşiktaş remains a venerated site of pilgrimage today. Both Süleyman and Yahya followed in the paths of their fathers. As boys, they studied at the feet of the same teachers, and both were apprenticed to a Greek goldsmith named Konstantin. Both

BERRIN TOROLSAN


BERRIN TOROLSAN

BRIAN MCKEE

Top left Beşiktaş grew up around the Sinan Pasha Mosque, built by Mimar Sinan in 1553 for the grand vizier Rüstem Pasha's brother
Left Sinan also built the dervish lodge of Sultan Süleyman's lifelong friend Yahya Efendi
Above left and right Descendants of the imperial family are buried in the lodge's garden, now a cemetery



This page The mimber (pulpit) in the Yahya Efendi dervish lodge
Opposite from top The gateway into the cemetery around the lodge – Abdülhamid's daughter Ayşe Sultan is buried here; the entrance to the shrine; the prayer hall has low windows overlooking the Bosphorus

BERRIN TOROLSAN

became accomplished poets, with Süleyman writing under the pen name Muhibbî (the Lover) and Yahya that of Müderrisî (the Teacher or Professor).

Both would likewise settle in the Ottoman capital, Istanbul, where they remained friends until Süleyman's death in 1566. Our sources report that Süleyman always addressed Yahya as *ağabey* (elder brother), while Yahya Efendi is said to have visited the palace only when faced with a situation he didn't approve of, and that on such occasions he would admonish his "younger brother" in harsh tones. If his advice was not heeded, he would retreat to his convent and refuse to set foot in the palace for months or even years at a time. When the sultan wanted to see him he came by barge to the shore below Yahya's dervish lodge and sent word up the hill. Sometimes Yahya Efendi went down to meet him; on other occasions he sent word that he was busy.

For many years Yahya followed the typical career of a teacher in theological seminaries in the capital. While the exact date he settled above Beşiktaş is unknown, it is generally linked to his displeasure with Süleyman over the execution of his eldest son, Prince Mustafa, in 1553.

In the hagiographical accounts of his life, the story of his founding of the Beşiktaş dervish lodge is linked to a Greek named Apostol: "One day Yahya's neighbour, Apostol, had been caught in a storm at sea; although he was a Christian, he prayed to Yahya Efendi that his life be spared. His prayers were answered. On his return to Istanbul he brought a jug of old wine to Yahya. As he walked up the hill to present

BERRIN TOROLSAN

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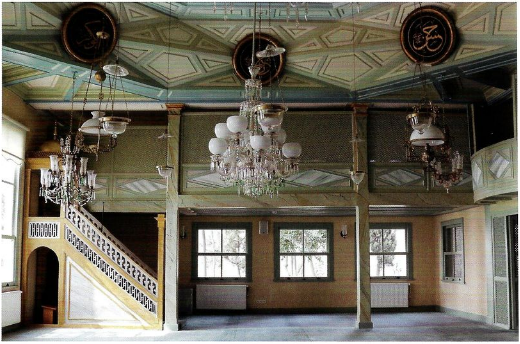

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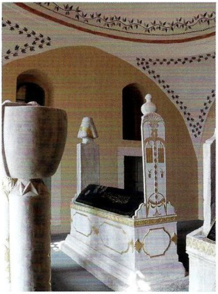

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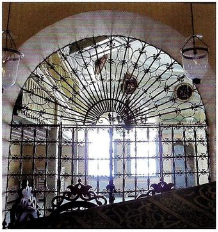

BERRIN TOROLSAN

his gift, the wine was transformed into pomegranate juice. Apostol was so amazed that he gave the site of the dervish convent to Yahya as a gift, converted to Islam, changed his name to Ali, and became one of Yahya's most devoted followers. He now lies at the foot of the Sheikh." While I cannot vouch for the accuracy of this account, one thing is certain: there is a dervish named Ali buried at the foot of Yahya's sarcophagus.

Yahya had entered the world before Süleyman and outlived him by four years. After his death in 1570 Yahya was buried next to his Beşiktaş convent in a magnificent mausoleum designed by the imperial architect, Mimar Sinan. An unusual tribute, and one that the traveller Evliyâ Çelebi informs us was commissioned and paid for by Süleyman's son and successor, Selim II, in honour of his late father's lifelong friend.

It is fitting that these two individuals, nurtured in infancy by the milk of a single mother and subjected in childhood to the same abuse at the hands of the goldsmith Konstantin, were reunited in death by burial in similar tombs by the same architect. In adulthood their lives had followed different paths: Süleyman emerged as a major figure on the 16th-century stage of world history, and Yahya Efendi became a much-venerated mystic. Today, ironically, while visiting pilgrims throng the tomb and convent complex of the reclusive Yahya Efendi, the tomb of the world-conquering ruler stands locked and relatively neglected in the garden behind the mosque that bears his name. ◆

Heath W Lowry, Distinguished Visiting Professor of History at Bahçeşehir University, is the author of many books on Ottoman history. His memoir, 'An Ongoing Affair: Turkey and I', is available from cornucopia.net

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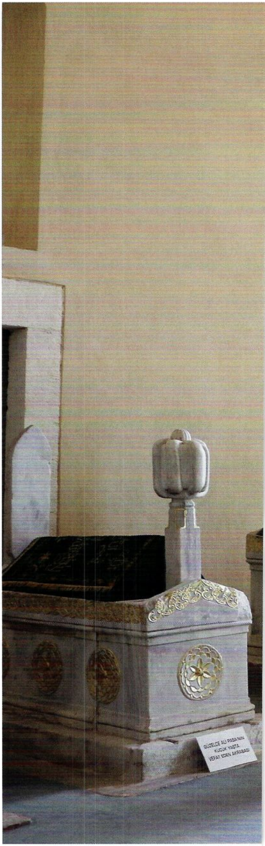

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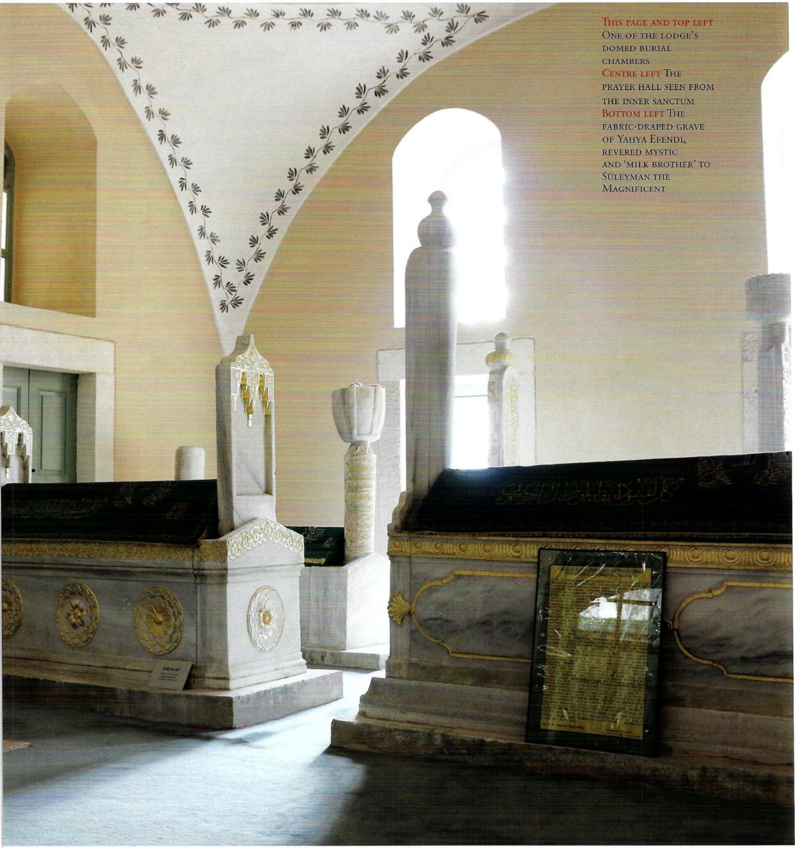
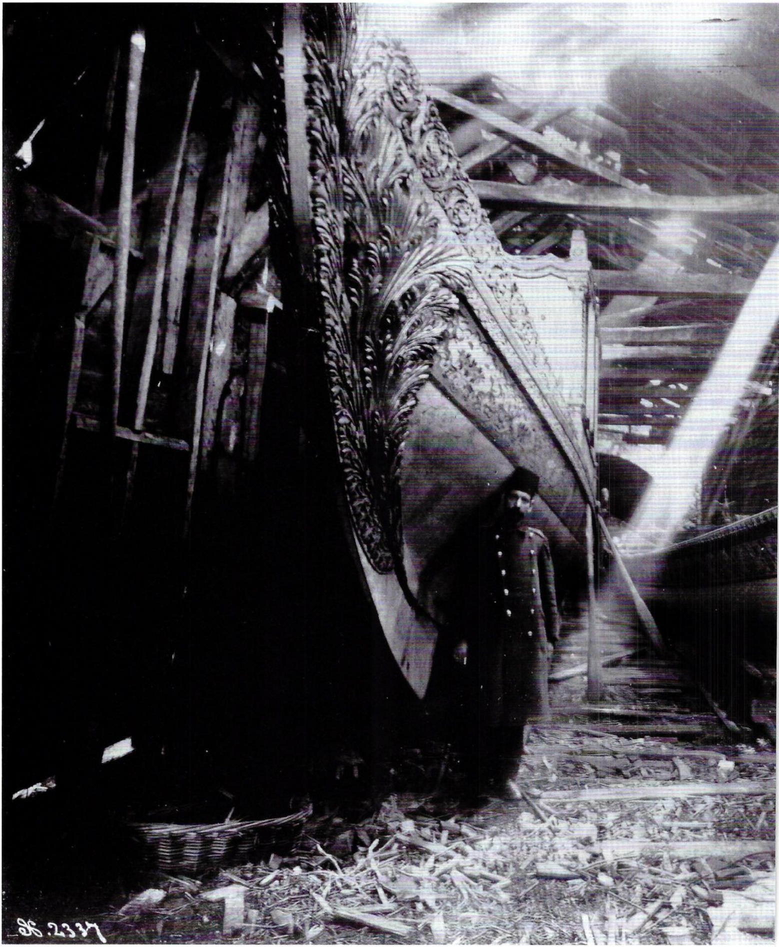


THIS PAGE AND TOP LEFT One of the lodge's domed burial chambers
CENTRE LEFT The prayer hall seen from the inner sanctum
BOTTOM LEFT The fabric-draped grave of Yahya Efendi, revered mystic and 'milk brother' to Süleyman the Magnificent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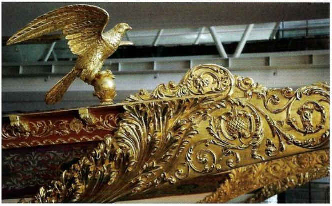
BURAK ÇETINTAŞ ARCHIVE

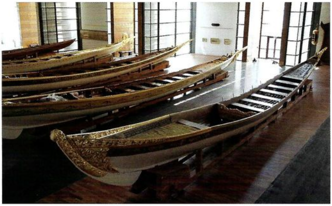
SWANS OF THE BOSPHORUS

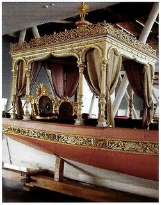
THE IMPERIAL BARGES IN THE NAVAL MUSEUM IN BEŞİKTAŞ ARE A SIGHT NO VISITOR SHOULD MISS

In order to provide a new home for the glorious sultans' barges, the Istanbul Naval Museum on the waterfront in Beşiktaş opened an entire new wing in 2013. These ornate, heavily gilded and very long vessels (measuring up to 30 metres) carried sultans around the Bosphorus, and from palace to mosque on Fridays, into the 20th century. Always treasured, they were safeguarded for a time below the walls of the Topkapı (left). Wed–Fri, 9–5, Sat–Sun, 9–6; denizmuzeleri.tsk.tr, +90 212 327 4345. See CORNUCOPIA 50.



FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG





Beşiktaş

ALIVE AND KICKING

FOOTBALL-CRAZY AND UNGENTRIFIED, YET WITH CULTURAL RICHES, LUXURY HOTELS AND SEA AIR, UNDERRATED BEŞİKTAŞ IS A PLACE OF TWO HALVES, BOTH WAITING TO BE DISCOVERED

It is easy to underestimate Beşiktaş. To the uninitiated it might seem humdrum, a crossroads, a traffic jam en route to somewhere else – downtown Taksim, prosperous Nişantaşı, the breezy Bosphorus – with dodgy Sixties housing crowded along a valley floor and climbing the hills. From the glass towers of Levent and Maslak, a manicured Barbaros Boulevard funnels traffic down a long hill – with panoramic views of the Sea of Marmara – to Sinan's tomb for Barbarossa and a seaside square full of buses.

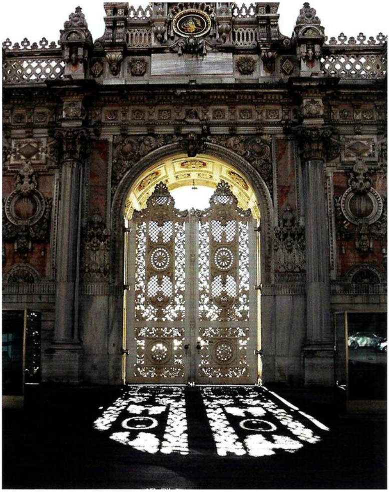
The crossroads bisects an avenue of plane trees, hemmed in by high walls, that follows the shoreline all the way from the square in front of Dolmabahçe to Ortaköy. As it passes the palace, a glass kiosk peering over the top and a giant gateway (left) are all that hint at the treasures within.

But there is more to this seaside suburb than meets the eye. Boats galore, for starters – it is the gateway to the Bosphorus, facing Üsküdar on the Asian shore and affording the quickest crossing by water. Nor is it short of cultural treasures. These include the spectacular **Naval Museum** and Dolmabahçe's new **National Palaces Paintings Museum**. From a boat you see that the shore is fringed with Ottoman palaces in gleaming good nick. **Dolmabahçe** is open to the public, the **Çırağan** is a luxury hotel, and others serve as schools. **Yıldız Palace**, above Beşiktaş, is the most unpalatial; from the water all that is visible is a dense park.

Four universities give Beşiktaş a youthful buzz. **Bahçeşehir** is next to the skateboard-friendly seaside square. **Yıldız** is in a corner of Yıldız Palace. The francophone **Galatasaray** occupies the Feriye Palace, on the road to Ortaköy. The **Mimar Sinan University Conservatoire** is in the Dolmabahçe kitchens.

Authority is once again in evidence here. Two years ago the PM opened an office in a Dolmabahçe annexe, so lanky riot police park water cannons next to the Ottoman cannons outside the Naval Museum.

Grand hotels abound, too, for this is both the Bosphorus and downtown. The old Çırağan Palace, now part of the massive **Çırağan Palace Kempinski**, was reconstructed inside its Venetian



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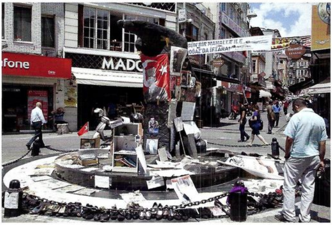


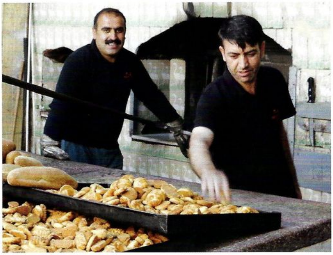
FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

Above The gate to Dolmabahçe Palace
Above right The Beşiktaş football team dates back to 1911 and earned the nickname the Black Eagles after an emphatic victory in 1940
Right The eagle briefly became a shrine to the Gezi protests in 2013, with pictures of the first victims alongside those of Atatürk

Gothic shell in 1990, and its infinity pool is as close as one can get to having the Black Sea for a swimming pool (like Eartha Kitt in the song). The **Four Seasons'** pool next door is equally inviting.

The **Swissôtel** is on the hill above Dolmabahçe; the **Conrad**, a giant concrete snail, fills the park below Yıldız; both have views all the way to the Topkapı. Part of the charm of the **Shangri-La**, in a former tobacco warehouse next to the PM's new office, is that, unusually for a luxury hotel, it is in the thick of things. Ferries disgorge commuters just feet away, and attempts to privatise the boat station in front of the hotel were fiercely resisted last year.

Beşiktaş's real boon is its people, a law unto themselves, but friendly. Firmly republican – the area has voted socialist since the founding of modern Turkey – it has one of the most zealously supported football clubs in the city, dating back to the early years of the 20th century. Football passions spill into every aspect of life, and black and white stripes are everywhere. Its stadium, now being rebuilt, faces the visitors' entrance to Dolmabahçe.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EFES
BEŞİKTAŞ ÇARŞI BALIK
SOKAKTA HAYAT VAR
BEŞİKTAŞ ÇARŞI BALIK
ÇARŞI BALIKÇISI
ÇARŞI BALIK RES
BRIAN MCKEE

KAYMAKLI KAHVALTI BURADA KURULUŞ
VESTEL
FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

ZİYAFET Ev Yemekleri
ZİYAFET Ev Yemekleri
ZİYAFET
EV YEMEKLERİ
ZİYAFET
CLIVE CROOK

Clockwise from top Freshly baked 'kurabiye' biscuits at 7–8 Hasanpaşa Fırın (named after a general whose signature joined up the Arabic numerals 7 and 8); Black Sea turbot (top row) have pride of place in the Beşiktaş fish market; Ziyafet serves home cooking to eat in or take out; Pando's kaymak café

Where eagles dare

The heart of Beşiktaş is the marketplace (*çarşı*). At its centre, next to the fish market behind the Sinan Pasha Mosque, is a small square with a sculpture of the Beşiktaş club symbol, the black *kartal* (eagle). The club's supporters, known as the Çarşı after the market, were the heroes of last year's Gezi protests, when uniquely, the three big Istanbul clubs found common cause. The high street, Ihlamur Caddesi, winds inland up a long valley floor to the Linden Pavilion (page 128). This and the narrow lanes that lead off it are crammed with bookshops, curtain shops, the odd piano shop, glassware shops, bakeries such as the famous **7–8 Hasanpaşa Fırın**, and lots of places to eat.

The blue **Pando Kaymak** café, presided over for 50 years by Pando and his wife, is popular for breakfast (Mumcu Bakkal Sok 5). The window displays eggs and honey with *kaymak* (clotted buffalo cream) made on

JOHN SCOTT

CLIVE CROOK

Above left Rival fans (Beşiktaş in black and white, Fenerbahçe in blue and yellow) offer free food during the Gezi protests
Above Children have their say
Below The dervish's doorstep
Right Dolmabahçe Palace and, over the water, Ayasofya's domes, seen from Abbasağa
Opposite A nameless café at the top of Abbasağa Park

BRIAN MCKEE

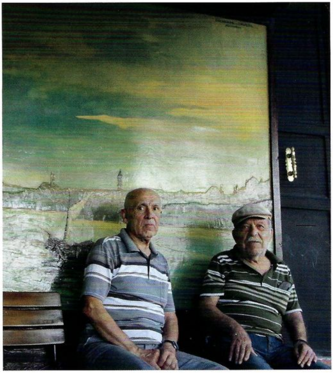
CLIVE CROOK

the premises. Some say the döner at **Karadeniz** directly opposite (No 6) is the best in Istanbul. **Reçel Türevleri** (Şair Veysi Sok 18), a café round the corner from the Beşiktaş Hamam, is the place to get stuck into unusual jams (including tomato, walnut, rosehip and aubergine) and scrambled egg with the hot-pepper dip *muhammara*. At **Pişi** (Çelebioğlu Sok 14) hip young things gather for the eponymous sweet or savoury doughnuts.

Balkan Lokantası (Şair Leylâ Sok 7) does regional treats such as fried liver or baked chicken breast under fluffy mash. Lots of women share the cooking at **Ziyafet** (farther down Ihlamur Caddesi, at Yeniyol Sok 3). Feast at makeshift tables under a tree on delicious seasonal home cooking: you point at dishes and they pile food onto your plate.

Hitting the heights

The reward for the steep climb to Abbasağa Park above the Beşiktaş market is the nameless café at the top, where one could happily dawdle away a summer over backgammon. Some streets have breathtaking views (the area either side of Barbaros Boulevard is called Cihannüma, Mirror of the World), and from Maşuklar Yokuşu (Lovers' Rise), looking down a street lined with beautifully restored old houses belonging to the Armenian Church, you spy the minarets of Ayasofya over a corner of Dolmabahçe. Other streets reveal fragments of Ottoman history. The finely proportioned **Ali Bey Fountain,** built in 1836, fills a surprising little square in Yeni



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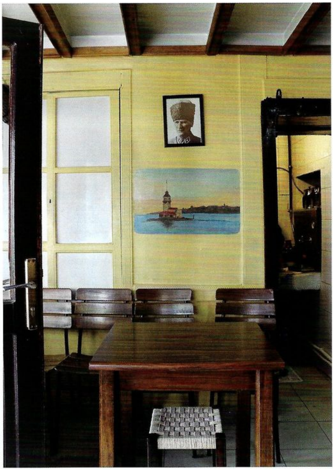

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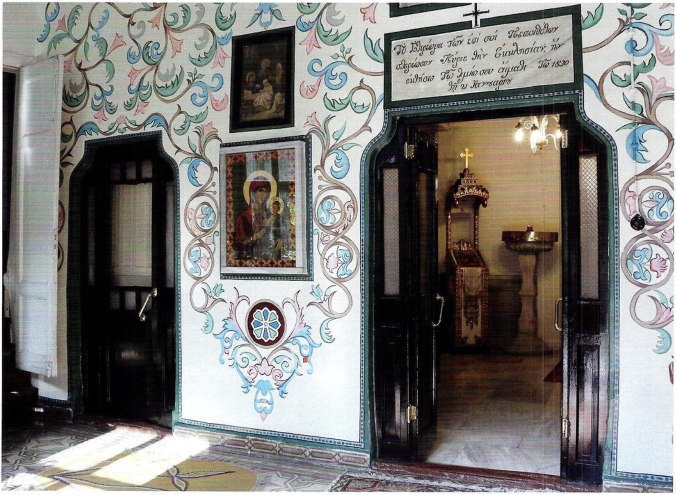
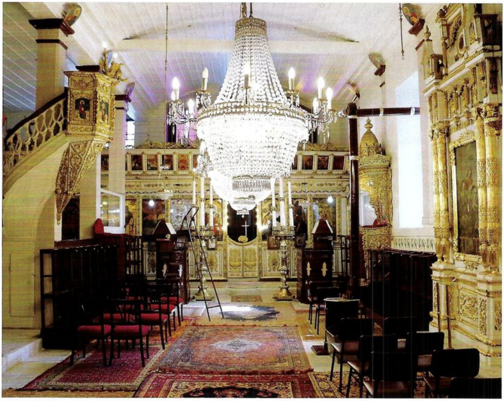




PHOTOGRAPHS BRIAN MCKEE

The Greek Orthodox Cihannüma Panagia Church, on Çırağan Caddesi, close to the seashore, was built in 1830 by Beşiktaş boatbuilders **Above** The courtyard is covered with decorative 'Rodoskârî' pebble mosaic **Top** The entrance has recently been given a spirited new look **Right** Chandeliers dwarf the interior, here being prepared for the Easter service

Mahalle Fırın Sokağı, one street below the café as you walk down to Barbaros Boulevard. At the shrine of the dervish saint Tuzcu Baba, down by Ihlamur Caddesi – horribly restored, but retaining its old wooden minaret – visitors say a prayer and leave salt (*tuz*) for the poor in a dish on top of a very large Roman capital, as they have done ever since 1490.

Abdülhamid II built a fountain every year of his 32-year reign – modest affairs involving serious engineering to bring spring water from the Belgrade Forest. One such fountain stands at the corner of Abbasağa Park, where extraordinary scenes took place last summer. After the protests in Taksim were quashed in June 2013, thousands took to the stage of the park's open-air theatre to speak their mind.

Down Selâmlık Caddesi, which leads back to the marketplace, turn left at the Abbasağa Mosque and note the grey door of the oldest house in the street, No 3. This was the home of Bisikletçi Fahri Bey, a saintly dervish who repaired bicycles, also nicknamed Kedili Baba, the Sheikh with Cats, as cats would follow him everywhere. He led a Sufi order under the last Caliph (exiled in 1923). Remarkably, his wife is still in residence on the top floor.

Two ways to Yıldız

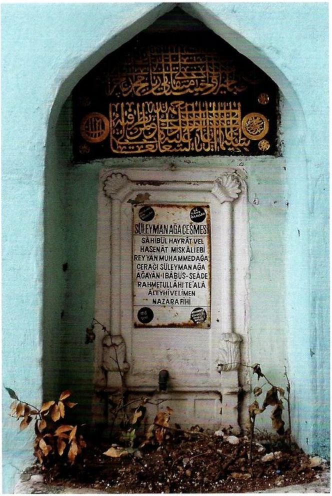
The cafés by the boat stations – one of the few seaside spots to order an affordable beer – are a good place to break for refreshments before tackling Beşiktaş's other hill. The **Sahil café's** *sütlaç* (rice pudding) is particularly restorative. Istanbul's best Indian, **Tandoori**, on the other side of Çırağan Caddesi (No 49), is confusingly disguised as an Italian restaurant.

At lunchtime, you could also take a sandwich into the timeless courtyard of the nearby Greek church, the **Cihannüma Panagia**, built in 1830. It usually opens at midday for a couple of hours. There are then two ways up to Yıldız Palace.

The adventurous can take Serencebey Yokuşu, a steep narrow street which starts at the traffic lights on the corner of Çırağan Caddesi. On the way up, stop at the blue-washed **Süleyman Agha Fountain,** built in 1704. The shrine behind it is also associated with Enfi Hasan Ağa, the finest singer and tambour player of the early 18th century.

At the top of the rise, wield a camera with caution or be pounced upon by agents outside MIT, the intelligence service. In the 19th century this hillside was covered with mansions in terraced gardens where only Abdülhamid's chosen few could live. Nothing remains except for the terraces and a street fountain built by Gazi Osman Pasha, the hero who fought the Russians at the Siege of Plevna in 1877.

The alternative, less taxing way up to Yıldız Palace is along Barbaros Boulevard. After a few hundred yards, take the road on the right behind Sheikh Zafir's Art Nouveau mausoleum (overleaf), past the large Neoclassical **Ertuğrul Tekke Mosque** – more mansion than mosque – and the huge modern Conrad Hotel.



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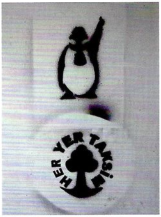

CLIVE CROOK

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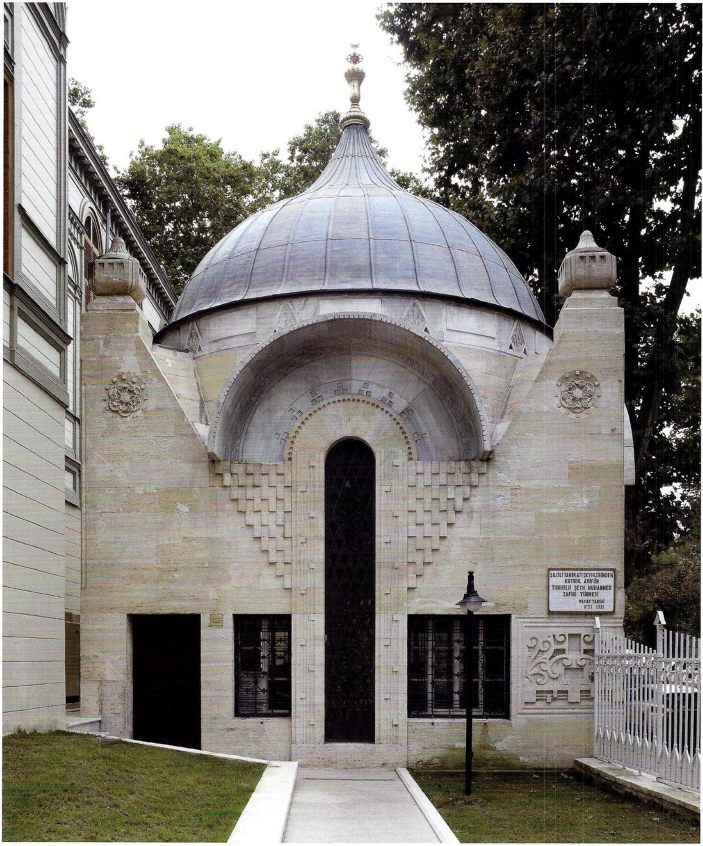
Above and above right The mosque and fountain on Serencebay Yokuşu built by the black eunuch, Süleyman Agha in 1704. Providing drinking water was an important act of Ottoman charity. The main source in the district was the impressive Kılıç Alî Pasha Cistern on nearby Çitlembik Yokuşu, now a fire-brigade museum

Left Protesters adopted the penguin as their mascot after TV channels ran wildlife documentaries rather than cover the 2013 protests

Below left The Alî Pasha Fountain in the Cihanümma district across the Barbaros Boulevard from Yildiz

Right Abdülhamid built a 'Hamidiye' fountain to mark each year of his 32-year reign. This one stands on a corner of Abbasağa Park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KUTBUL ARİFİN
TUNUSLU ŞEYH MUHAMMED
ZAFİRİ TÜRBESİ
VEFAT TARİHİ
١٣٢١ 1321

JÜRGEN FRANK

JÜRGEN FRANK

Dining out

At the end of a long day, you have a choice of places for refreshment in Beşiktaş. A place for an early evening drink is the **Şair Leyla Bistro** (Şair Leylâ Sok 4), or seek out the meyhanes behind the fish market on Köyiçi Meydan Sokağı.

For fancier dining, head to **Akaretler**, the fashionable bit of Beşiktaş. In Şair Nedim Caddesi, **Corvus Wine & Bite** (No 5) serves some of the best wines in Turkey, from its vineyards on the Aegean island of Bozcaada (ancient Tenedos). Contrasting with the macho meyhanes of the fish market, **Sıdıka** (No 38) is owned by women, who offer rakı and Aegean nouveau meze in a more romantic atmosphere. The avante-garde newcomer is **Gile** at No 14 (see page 181).

For "smart with a view", try **Vogue** (BJK Plaza, A Blok), in a tower block behind the terraced houses. On Barbaros Boulevard, the view from the Conrad's top-floor bar is also spectacular. And Beşiktaş has the **Shang Palace**, a classy Chinese restaurant down on the quay, in the Shangri-La.

Boating tips

Beşiktaş has two boat stations: the **Eski Beşiktaş İskelesi** (in the square) is used by the Üsküdar shuttle and **Bosphorus** commuter boats; the Barbaros **Hayrettin Paşa İskelesi** (by the Shangri-La) is for Kadıköy. Next to the Eski İskele are lots of private ferries known as *motor*, which sail even more frequently. Üsküdar takes 5 minutes, Kadıköy 25. Both are strongly recommended. You can also change boats and continue on to Eminönü or Karaköy, to make a grand entrance into the Golden Horn – all for the price of a glass of tea.

The sultan's guru

Humdrum Beşiktaş is an unlikely place to find **Sheikh Zafir's mausoleum and library**, an Art Nouveau gem. They were built in 1905 by the court architect Raimondo D'Aronco for the Libyan Sufi who became Abdülhamid's spiritual guide.

The story goes that the sheikh was in the Grand Bazaar when news came that the future sultan had had a serious accident on the edge of the Belgrade Forest. Driving himself, Abdülhamid, who as a young man was not averse to the odd drink, had overturned his carriage. The sheikh met the young prince and made a great impression on him. When he became sultan, a grateful Abdülhamid persuaded the sheikh to settle in Istanbul, building him a large dervish hall (*tekke*), a mosque and two mansions, one for each wife. The *tekke* and mosque have been restored, but the houses, with their beautiful murals, have been allowed to fall into ruin. They were habitable and full of the sheikh's books even in the 1990s.

The sheikh's North African origins were a fine excuse for D'Aronco to give his masterpiece an Ancient Egyptian twist.

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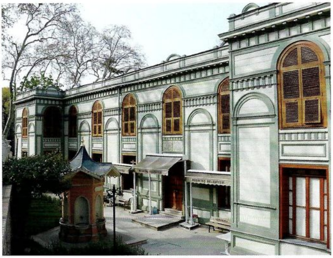
BURAK ÇETINTAŞ ARCHIVE



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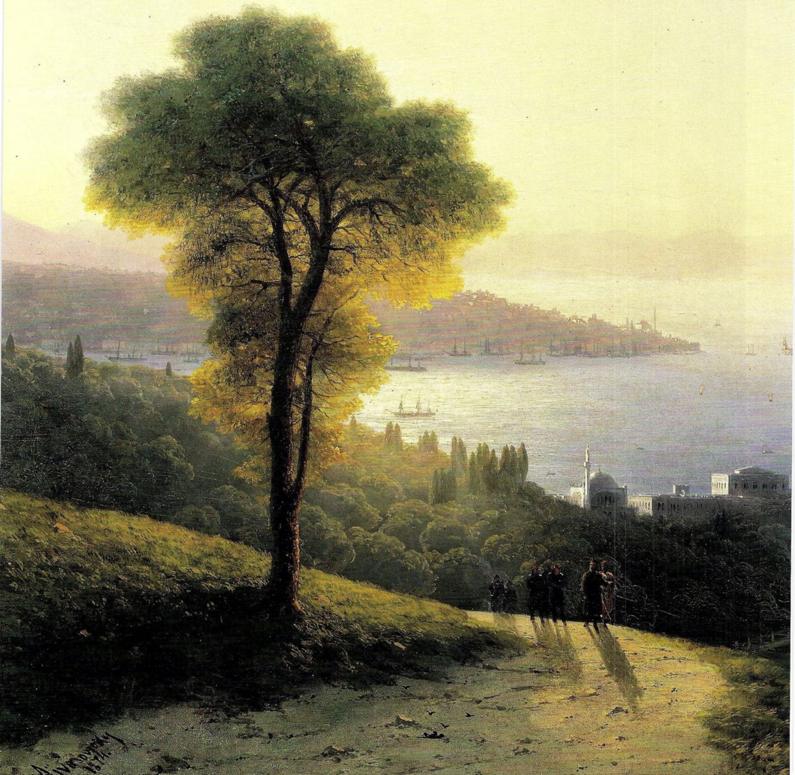
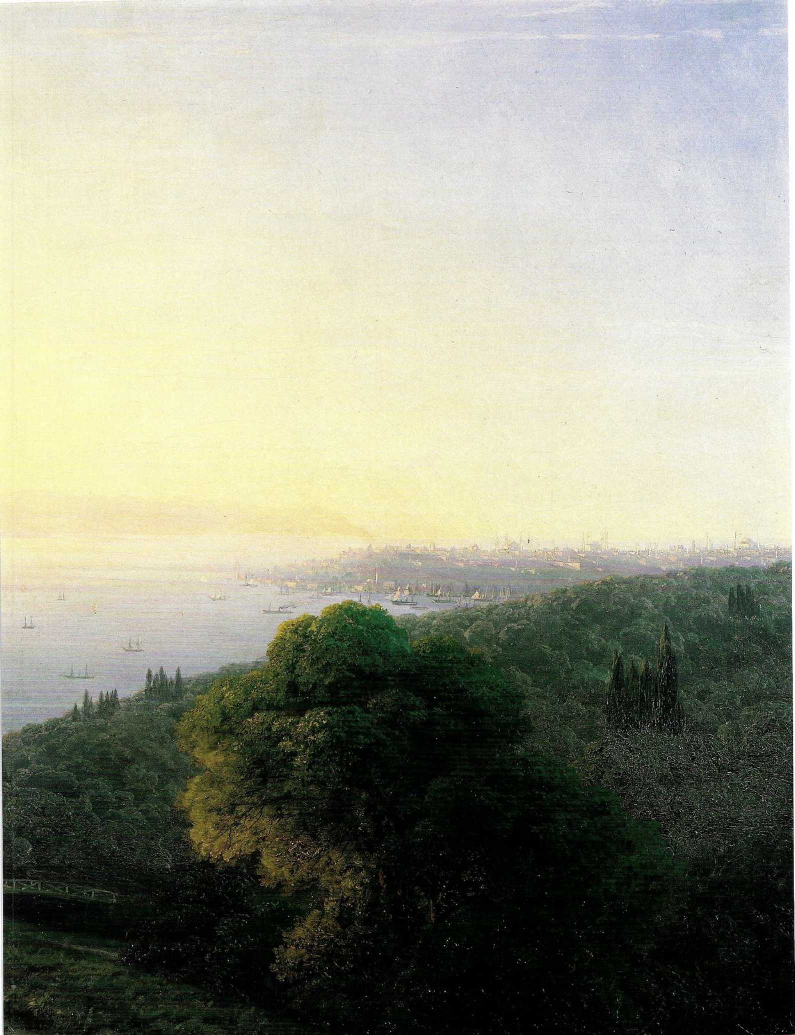
Opposite and top Little visited, and often camouflaged by parked minibuses, the tomb of Abdülhamid's spiritual guide, Sheikh Hamza, is considered D'Aronco's finest work Above The theatrical fountain in the garden of the mausoleum bears Abdülhamid's 'tuğra' (cipher) Right and above right Part of the complex (though not by D'Aronco) is a splendid dervish lodge and mosque, which Abdülhamid attended on Fridays, before building his own mosque up the hill

Sultan in a landscape

This view of the Bosphorus from Yıldız Park is by the Crimean painter Ivan Aivazovsky (1817–1900). Painted in 1874, it shows the artist with his pupil Sultan Abdülaziz walking up the hill at Yıldız in the early morning. The building in the centre by the shore is a fanciful depiction of the sultan's new Çırağan Palace. The Topkapı can be seen on the far right emerging from the mist, and Üsküdar across the water on the left. Abdülaziz had already begun to dot the hillside with Neoclassical stone and marble pavilions when his nephew Abdülhamid succeeded in 1876. The Malta Köşkü (built of Maltese stone) and Çadır Köşkü (Tent Kiosk), dating from the 1870s, are both now cafés. This is more or less the view you will see today if you have tea at the Malta Kiosk at the top of the hill – except that you will be looking over tall trees. Out of sight here are the triumphal arches that used to link the waterside palace to the park and Abdülahamid's astounding Chalet Kiosk, the wooden guesthouse built for Kaiser Wilhelm II between 1880 and 1898, now a museum.





Ortaköy

BE DAZZLED

THE BOSPHORUS LAPS AT THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE SERENE ORTAKÖY MOSQUE AS A SEA BREEZE OF CHANGE BLOWS THROUGH ISTANBUL'S COSMOPOLITAN 'MIDDLE VILLAGE'.

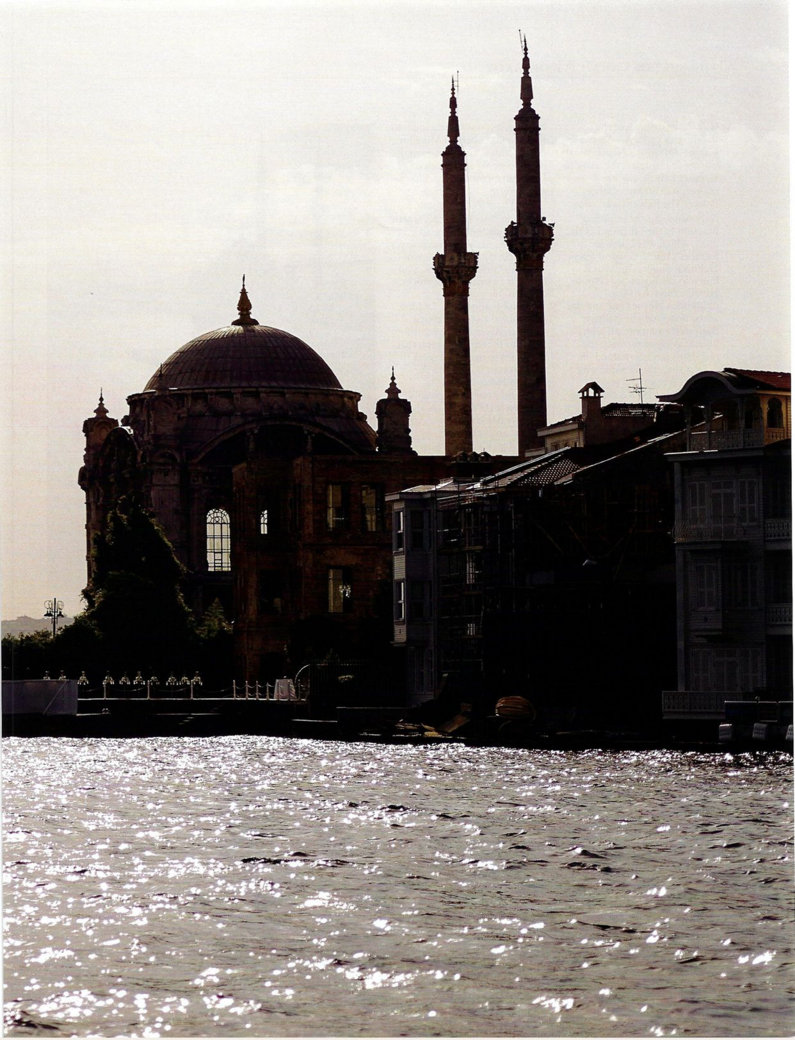
BY MALIKA BROWNE

To many Istanbullus, mention of Ortaköy (Middle Village) conjures up images of gridlocked traffic caused by the nightlife that clings to its narrow coastal road like mussels to rope. Less jaded visitors find here the nearest thing to Venice that Istanbul has to offer. Much is made in tourist literature of the "vibrant cobbled bazaar" on the waterfront – in reality a rabbit warren of stalls selling tat, over which "Welcome" arches proclaim "*Sokakta Hayat Var*" (There is Life in the Streets), a sponsored slogan of forced municipal jollity.

The bazaar is a sad fact of life. Grin and bear it on your

LATTERDAY GRANDEUR: THE SPLENDID MOSQUE AT ORTAKÖY WAS CENTRAL TO THE VISION OF A NEW IMPERIAL CITY. WHEN ABDÜLMECİD ARRIVED BY BOAT FOR FRIDAY PRAYERS, A MILITARY BAND WOULD STRIKE UP UNDER THE BATON OF HIS BANDMASTER, DONIZETTI PASHA, BROTHER OF THE COMPOSER. THE ÇIRAĞAN AND DOLMABAHÇE PALACES ARE DOWNSTREAM AS YOU SAIL TOWARDS THE OLD CITY, SEEN HERE ON THE HORIZON

JÜRGEN FRANK



way to the delights of the dazzling 1853 Büyük Mecidiye Camii – Ortaköy's Neoclassical waterside mosque – the work of Karabet Balyan, whose masterpiece is Dolmabahçe Palace. The Balyans were also responsible for the imposing mansion at the other end of the quay, which was home to Karabet's fourth son and fellow architect, Simon. Today it is home to the Bosphorus **House Hotel**, a branch of the ubiquitous **House Café** and the acclaimed Thai and Balinese **Banyan Restaurant**, all with breathtaking views from the reclaimed land they stand on.

Ever since the mosque was built, its weight and seaside location have been a challenge to engineers. Restoration kept it under wraps for many years, but the tattered tarpaulins finally come off this year.

The village scene

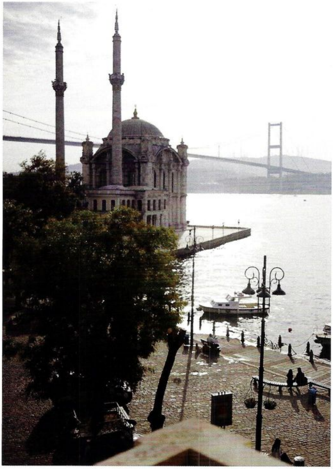
Whether you are in Ortaköy to board a Bosphorus boat from the dainty jetty, or to try one of the waterfront's famous *kumpir* (baked potatoes) with all their Technicolor toppings, or just to sip a coffee with a view of the Bosphorus Bridge and the mosque, it is worth straying into the old village behind Muallim Naci Caddesi, the busy coastal road, to see what remains of its Ottoman Greek and Jewish atmosphere.

The Ortaköy Synagogue (Muallim Naci Cad 40) is worth a quick look, before a glance at the outside of the 16th-century hamam by Sinan. In a piece of civic vandalism, the baths, shut down in 1985, are now offices, closed to the public.

From Muallim Naci Caddesi, head inland along Dereboyu Caddesi (Riverside Street) and dive into the narrow streets that sprout off to the left (a good place to start is opposite the **Princess Hotel** at No 10).

The fishmonger's **Dalyan Balıkçısı** (Eski Bahçe Sok 1) and **Ortaköy Balıkçısı** (Muvakkit Sok 29) are highly rated by locals. **Yeni Uğur Helvacısı** (Eski Bahçe Sok 2) sells delicious nutty *lokum* (Turkish delight) made in Adana with honey instead of sugar. Another shop sells *yufka*, light-as-air sheets of *börek* pastry ready to be cooked at home.

Several bakeries sit alongside junk shops that have seen better days and wares. Do not pass up the opportunity to visit the



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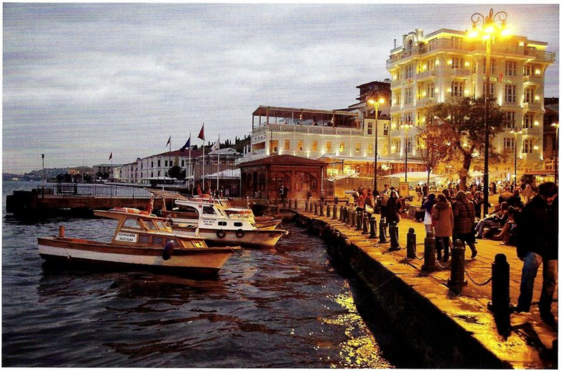

FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

Above Ortaköy quay and the waterside mosque built for Abdülmecid I, who would travel from Dolmabahçe Palace by caique. His brother and successor, Abdülaziz, made even more use of the mosque when he took up residence at his new Beylerbeyi Palace, just visible across the water under the Bosphorus Bridge
Opposite The mosque is a stately pile with an imperial lodge at the front. Inside, the sun reflects off the water into the lofty dome
Left The bright lights of The House Hotel, originally apartments which the Balyans, the architects responsible for the mosque, built for their own use with materials left over from the Beylerbeyi and Çırağan Palaces

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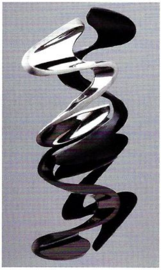
Ortaköy Fırını (Eski Bahçe Sok 26), a family-run bakery that since 1968 has been turning out, among other things, exquisite *simit* (sesame rings), round sourdough loaves, cornbread, walnut cakes and baguettes.

If you want something more substantial, try the **Ortaköy Kahvaltı Evi**, diagonally opposite at No 33, for a classic Turkish breakfast including delicious *menemen* (scrambled eggs with peppers and tomatoes). The waiters will step across the street to buy your morning *simit*. Or, if it's nearing evening, try the much-loved **Sefarad Meyhane**, which hides behind thick foliage at Muvakkit Sokağı 21. Only five years old, the interior looks well-established as a neighbourhood favourite – a rickety wooden tavern with gramophones and wood-panelled walls.

The art of alchemy

If you have time to linger in Ortaköy, visit the jeweller Sabrina Fresko in her **Simya Gallery** in Manoyalı Apt (Muallim Naci Cad 51), just past the old hamam. An architect by training and a sculptor influenced by Barbara Hepworth, Sabrina, who is of Sephardic and Russian parentage, turned her hand to jewellery 20 years ago, creating highly original but very wearable jewellery from resin-covered silver, copper, coral and,



SIMYA GALLERY

BERRIN TOROLSAN

recently, watch mechanisms.

Another interesting local is Engin Demirkol, who runs **Hazal Kilim** from her beautiful five-storey 1850s wooden konak, just behind the mosque (Mecidiye Köprüsü Sok 9). A haven amid the grockle shops, her elegant gallery elevates the humble Anatolian kilim to an art form. Her cushions, stitched from fragments of village textiles, are unique, as are her "Rothko carpets". Engin laments the fact that many new "Turkish" kilims for sale elsewhere are made in China. For the smaller Western home (and luggage allowance), she sells Anatolian storage bags, seams unpicked to make manageable rugs. She is a mine of information, and there is no pressure to buy.

Seaside symphony

Part of Abdülmecid's vision was that Ortaköy should be the grand finale to the port of Istanbul as you sailed up the Bosphorus. The village also stood at the top of Istanbul's first modern avenue, which ran all the way to Dolmabahçe.

After the mosque was built, the waterfront as far as Arnavutköy was lined with palatial yalıs, most of which burned down in due course.

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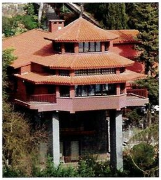


MIMDAP.ORG

Opposite Hazal, in a street leading to the Ortaköy Mosque, sells Anatolian rugs. On the wall is a Malatya kilim
Far left 'The Kiss', a small statue in silver and resin, by the sculptor Sabrina Fresko
Above Posing in front of the Ortaköy Mosque
Left Pagoda meets kiosk in Bruno Taut's 1938 house in the woods above Ortaköy
Below The view from Ulus 29, a chic hilltop restaurant

JÜRGEN FRANK

One relic in the middle of Ortaköy itself, the **Esma Sultan Yalı**, was a wedding gift to a daughter of Abdülaziz. It came down in the world after the demise of the Empire, serving as a Greek school, a tobacco depot and carpenter's workshop before being burned out in 1975. Today its stone shell has cleverly been left unrestored and encloses a huge glass cube that is a popular venue for jazz concerts and fine-art auctions.

In the 1990s Ortaköy was a dreamy backwater, like some forgotten island in the Venetian Lagoon, with wooden fishing boats pulled up on long planks lining the quay, where truant schoolchildren escaped to play backgammon under the plane trees. When the Edin brothers rescued some of the old houses, including the Balyan apartments beside the boat station, it only gained in charm – a delightful, gently restored Left Bank. Commercial overkill came later.

The place to live in Ortaköy is the wooded hillside just past the Bosphorus Bridge. Here stands Ortaköy's most important 20th-century building, the **Taut House**, an extraordinary structure on stilts, part Turkish kiosk, part pagoda, built in 1938. It was the last work of the prolific architect Bruno Taut, a refugee from Nazi Germany who lived in Japan and then Turkey. Across the garden lived Princess Neslişah Sultan, the last surviving member of the Ottoman dynasty to have been born before the fall of the Empire, who died in 2012 at 91.

Ortaköy is now synonymous with the noisy nightlife of the stretch called Kuruçeşme: think Ferraris, footballers, bodyguards and sleepless nights for residents. The nightclub **Reina** and the **Hôtel Les Ottomans** next door set the tone. **Angelique** is just off the seaside square.

Ortaköy also has its share of tasteful nightlife. **Feriye** is a smart waterside restaurant in an old Ottoman police station behind the high walls of Çırağan Caddesi. And up on the hill is the chic **Ulus 29**, with its magnificent view over the Bosphorus Bridge – both places to celebrate. ◆

TRAVEL NOTES

Bosphorus blues

BOATS Mid-20th-century Istanbul was blessed with a superb sea-transport network. No need to study timetables: you just turned up. The system has gone from bad to worse in the past decade. Most of the white steamer *vapur* ferries so suited to the Bosphorus – silent, swift and creating almost no wake to damage the fragile historic houses along the shore – were taken out of service. They were replaced by smelly, noisy, ungainly diesel-powered vessels and left to rust in a giant yard on the Dardanelles. Boat stations were leased to restaurants, and most lines stop at weekends when the coast road is clogged.

Ortaköy counts itself lucky to have two boats from its underused *iskele* down to Eminönü in the morning (7.50 and 8.20), and four upstream in the evening, between 6 and 7. Dentur, who run the Üsküdar–Beşiktaş shuttle, offer a spartan service from the exposed quay behind the mosque; boarding is hazardous in bad weather. Beşiktaş is more fortunate. A proper *vapur* goes from the **Barbaros Hayrettin Paşa** jetty to Kadıköy every half-hour; the **Eski Vapur İskelesi** serves Üsküdar and the Bosphorus. Timetables: sehirhatlari.com.tr.

OTHER TRANSPORT **Nişantaşı's** metro stop is Osmanbey. Buses and *dolmuş* rush up and down from Beşiktaş and across the hill from Taksim. The *dolmuş* to Beşiktaş goes from Harbiye, to Taksim from The House Café in Teşvikiye, and to Eminönü (hop on the tram in Kabataş if the traffic is heavy) and Kadıköy on the Asian side from the park at the top of Akkavak and Şakayık Sokağı. **Ortaköy** is on the congested Bosphorus road. In rush hour and at weekends, take the hilly detour behind Yıldız Park. If you drive through the park, there is a small entrance fee.

Grand hotels

If Beyoğlu prides itself on its converted palazzos, Nişantaşı has chic city hotels, such as **The House Hotel Nişantaşı** (thehousehotel.com) on Abdi İpekçi Caddesi, the **Park Hyatt** (Bronz Sok 4, istanbul.park.hyatt.com, and soon-to-open **St Regis**.

The slopes of the Lower Bosphorus, from Maçka Park to the First Bosphorus Bridge, are where the grand landmark hotels rise – some elegant, others unspeakable eyesores. Maçka Park's are the **Hilton** (Cumhuriyet Cad, +90 212 315 6000), with elegant Modernist silhouette, and the **Swissôtel the Bosphorus** (Bayıldım Cad 2, swissotel.com/istanbul), looking over Dolmabahçe's shoulder.

Beşiktaş grands are the **Shangri-La** (shangri-la.com/Istanbul), the **Conrad** (conradhotels3.hilton.com) and, on the seafront, the **Four Seasons at the Bosphorus** (fourseasons.com/bosphorus) and **Çırağan Palace Kempinski** (kempinski.com/istanbul). For buzz, try Ortaköy's **House Hotel Bosphorus** (thehousehotel.com). A reputable small hotel with good views is **La Maison**, just below Yıldız Palace (Müvezzi Cad 63, lamaison.com.tr).

Art and history

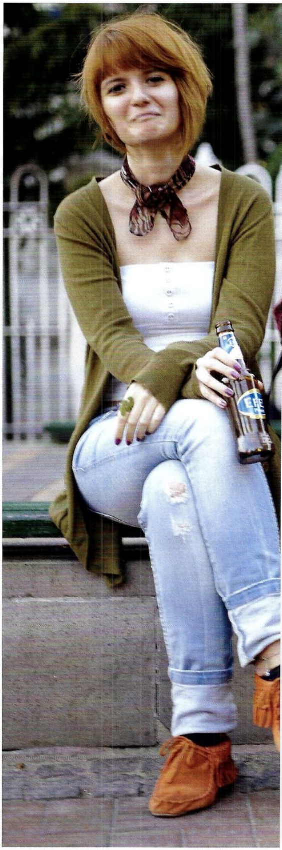
MUSEUMS
The **National Palaces** (closed Mon and Thurs, millisaraylar.gov.tr) include **Dolmabahçe** (9–4, restricted to 3,000 visitors per day); **Ihlamur Kasrı (Linden Pavilion)** in Beşiktaş (9–5); **Şale Kasrı (Chalet Kiosk)** in Yıldız Park (9–4). The **Yıldız Palace Museum**, on the Barbaros Bulvarı, Beşiktaş (9–7, closed Tues, yildizsarayi.com.tr), also houses the **City Museum** (9–4.30, closed Sun and Mon). Also recommended: the **Military Museum (Askeri Müze)**, Valikonağı Caddesi, by the Harbiye crossroads (9–5, closed Mon and Tues); the **Naval Museum**, Beşiktaş (9–5, Sat–Sun 9–6, closed Mon, denizmuzeleri.tsk.tr/en/).

GALLERIES
NIŞANTAŞI The veterans in Istanbul's first contemporary art scene are **Maçka Sanat** (Mim Kemal Öke Cad 31, mackasanatgalerisi.com) and **Mine** (Prof Dr Müfide Küley Sok 1, minesanat.com). Younger counterparts include **Dirimart** (Abdi İpekçi Cad 7), **Kare** (No 22, kareartgallery.com) and **x-ist** (No 42, artxist.com). The **Milli Reasürans Art Gallery** (Maçka Cad 35, millireasuranssanatgalerisi.com) has non-selling shows. In Hüsrev Gerede Caddesi (a steep shortcut to Beşiktaş), spacious **İlayda** (No 37, galleryilayda.com) is always interesting. The auctioneers **Portakal** (Mim Kemal Öke Cad 8, rportakal.com) and **Alif Art** (No 11, alifart.com) offer Ottoman, Orientalist and contemporary art. **Burak** (Hak Pasajı, burakfilateli.com) auctions books and stamps.

BEŞIKTAŞ After its 2008 facelift, smart new boutiques opened in Akaretler but did poorly, so galleries moved in. Try **Kuad Gallery** (Süleyman Seba Cad 52, kuadgallery.com), **CAM** (No 25, camgaleri.com) and **Rampa** (Şair Nedim Cad 20, rampaistanbul.com).

ORTAKÖY For kilims visit **Hazal** (Mecidiye Köprüsü Sok 9, hazalkilim.com); for jewellery, **Simya Gallery** (Muallim Naci Cad 51, simyagaleri.com).

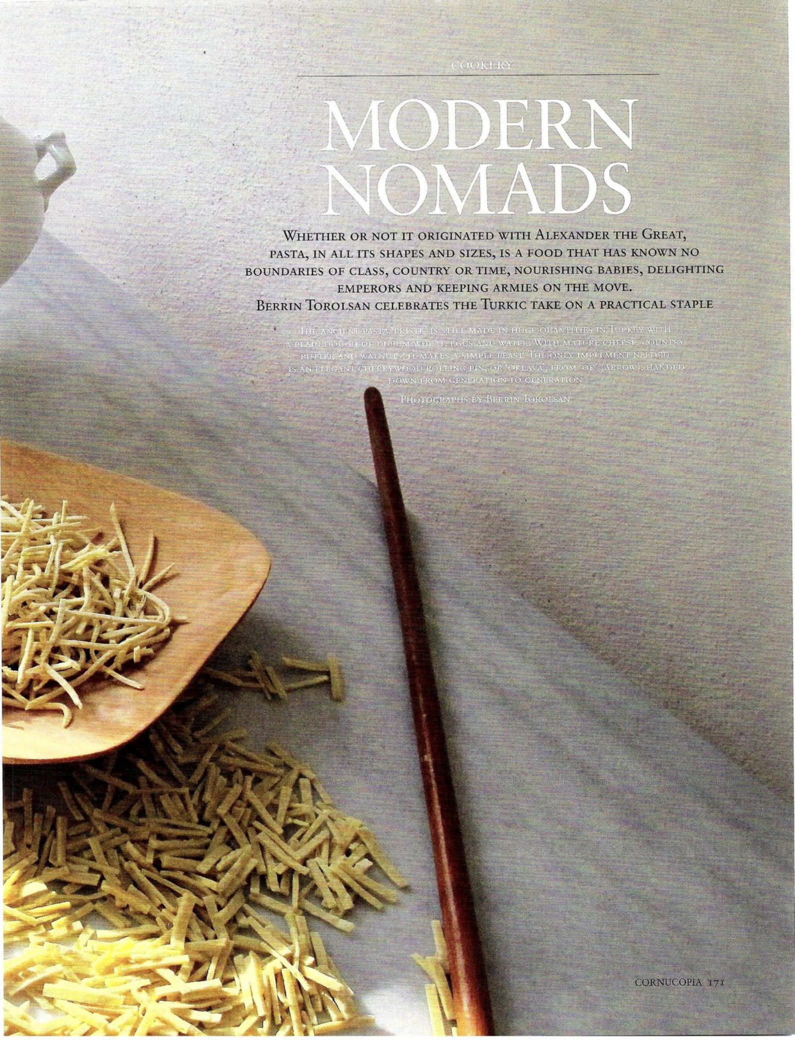
CORNUCOPIA'S ONLINE GUIDE
For listings, links and maps covering the whole city, see cornucopia.net/guide/istanbul



JÜRGEN FRANK

RIGHT HAPPY HOUR IN ORTAKÖY SQUARE

NIKON
DRAFT BEER



MODERN NOMADS

Whether or not it originated with Alexander the Great, pasta, in all its shapes and sizes, is a food that has known no boundaries of class, country or time, nourishing babies, delighting emperors and keeping armies on the move.

Berrin Torolsan celebrates the Turkic take on a practical staple

The ancient pasta 'erişte' is still made in huge quantities in Turkey with a plain dough of durum wheat, eggs and water. With mature cheese, country butter and walnuts, it makes a simple feast. The only implement needed is an elegant cherrywood rolling pin, or 'oklava', from 'ok' (arrow), handed down from generation to generation

Photographs by Berrin Torolsan

With its hundreds of different shapes, pasta is today one of the most widely consumed and enjoyed of all the staples. The ultimate comfort food, it nourishes families, bachelors, students, babies, the elderly, convalescents and everyone else besides.

We owe the introduction and worldwide fame of pasta to Italy, and the countless forms it takes are still identified today by their Italian names. Trade in pasta seems to have started early. The medieval geographer al-Idrisi in 1150 reports shiploads of *itriyya*, dried pasta, being sent from Palermo, the old capital of the Arab emirate of Sicily, to countries both Muslim and Christian. And a Genoese soldier's will from 1279 lists among his possessions "*barixella una plena maccaronis*" – a chest full of macaroni.

The Turkish name for the pasta you buy in shops, *makarna*, is borrowed from the Italian *maccheroni* (anglicised as macaroni), the generic name for tubular pasta. This foreign import became part of Turkish cuisine and was transported, along with its Turkish pronunciation, to the Ottoman Empire's Balkan and Near Eastern domains. Miss Julia Pardoe, in her book *The City of the Sultan*, describes a visit to the imperial macaroni factory near the Selimiye Barracks above Üsküdar in 1836: "the large hall in which we stood was entirely over-canopied with ropes of macaroni, and surrounded by presses and rollers".

Back in the 18th century, however, the palace historian Ahmet Cavid remarked on the appearance in Istanbul of various products from Venice, Cyprus and Crete made with dough similar to traditional Turkish pasta, which he called *erişte*. It seems that Istanbullus took to this imported fast food, which even the city's poorest families could afford. Although *erişte* was prepared in most households, it never became commercialised as it did in Italy.

Erişte consists of a simple dough of wheat flour and water, often enriched with eggs, rolled out with a special long, thin rolling pin called an *oklava*, then cut into ribbons similar to *tagliatelle*. These ribbons are placed neatly on top of each other, to be sliced crosswise into matchstick-like pieces called *çöp*, then left out to dry on clean flour-dusted sheets and stored in cotton

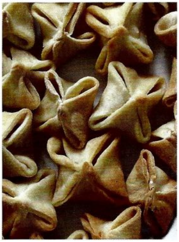
'TUTMAÇ', PASTA WITH YOGHURT: A TURKIC DISH ENJOYED FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS bags for later use. *Erişte* can also be cooked fresh (see recipe). The soft dough is pliable and versatile, and has evolved over time into an endless variety of playful shapes – twists, pellets, butterflies and bow ties.

The word *pasta*, derived from the Latin, simply means dough. Cooking makes it digestible and palatable, and boiling it in liquid rather than baking gives it a different texture and taste from bread. Which came first – baking or boiling? Bread or pasta? Perhaps both were born at the same time. Either way, the versatility of pasta opened up myriad new horizons in the gastronomic odyssey.

To trace the origins of pasta one must look to the distant steppes of Asia Major. Reading *A Soup for the Qan*, an academic study of a medieval dietary manual written in 1330 for Tugh Temür, the Mongol emperor of China, in Qanbalıq (modern-day Beijing), is like travelling in a time warp. An invaluable record of the cuisine of its day, an extraordinarily cosmopolitan era, its recipes include Mongolian wolf and bear soups, Chinese fish dishes, the Tibetan gruel *tsampa* and Turkic specialities, with pasta noodles and their many variations at the fore. Amazingly, the methods of preparing these dishes, including their Turkish names, have been fossilised in time. Recipes range from the rustic soup *uvmaç* to more sophisticated dishes that evolved over the years, such as the noodle dish *tutmaç*, *mantı* dumplings and the pastry *päräk* – all different forms of pasta cooked in boiling liquid.

One simple soup, *uvmaç* (*ovmaç* in modern Turkish), takes its name from the action involved in crumbing little pieces of dough by rubbing them between your palms or fingers, as you drop them into the boiling water or stock. The addition of previously fried minced meat – given in *A Soup for the Qan* as *quru qıyma* (dry mince) – is recommended. The soup remains part of the Turkish culinary repertoire. It is quick and filling and might effortlessly be prepared in large quantities with minimal ingredients in a bubbling cauldron over a campfire to feed many mouths on the move.

The second recipe to stand out from the imperial dietary guide of 1330 is *tutmaç*, praised in the book for its ability to increase *ch'i*, or life force. This is another wholesome, energy-giving dish. The recipe is sketchy (everyone knew what to do), but its preparation is probably little changed and requires peaceful conditions rather than a battlefield, with a flat surface on which to roll the dough into a thin sheet, to be cut into more or less identical pieces. Again, boiling water or broth is used to cook the dough. Each piece is pinched either in the middle to form a bow, like *farfalle*, or from opposing corners. Why the added touch of labour? Possibly to allow it, once cooked, to trap more butter or yoghurt in its curves. The tender pasta is strained and served with fried minced meat and yoghurt.



EACH 'MANTI' CONCEALS A CHICKPEA

Mahmud of Kashgar includes *tutmaç* in his monumental 11th-century *Divan of Turkic Languages*, commenting that the inventor was believed to be Alexander the Great, who created it to feed his desperately hungry soldiers. Does this apocryphal story really suggest that as early as 300BC, during their epic Asian campaign, the exhausted Macedonians were being supplied with local *tutmaç*? There are many varieties of *tutmaç*, a standard dish made all over modern Turkey. Meat is sometimes replaced with lentils or chickpeas. There is a saying in Anatolian folklore: "*Uvmaç uvmayı bilmez, ele tutmaç kesmeye gider*" – someone who doesn't know how to make crumbs of *uvmaç* goes off to cut *tutmaç*.

The emperor's gastronomic guide also lists *manta* (Turkish *mantı*, Uighur *manta* or Kazakh *manty*), which is similar to Italian ravioli and familiar today to anyone who enjoys Asian food. This dish is more refined and relatively luxurious compared with the previous ones. The rolled-out dough is cut into identical squares, and filled with meat enriched with pepper and other spices. Many nimble female hands are necessary to complete the time-consuming process to create these bundles, which are sometimes plain and neat, sometimes more ornate. Haute cuisine in the 14th century had a rich repertoire of these mouthwatering morsels, including flower-shaped and saffron-dyed varieties. Leaving the etymology of the name to the linguist – is it Turkic or Chinese? – *mantı* and its many nourishing derivatives are enjoyed all over the world today.

The recipe for *shilön* calls for *päräk* (*börek*) to be cooked in water and is the most sophisticated pasta recommended to the khan. Dough is rolled out into sheets, to be parboiled in a cauldron before being layered with a filling of meat, onions and ginger. Similar to Italian lasagne in principle, this pastry is known in Turkey today as *su böreği*. A cheese filling with herbs is standard, but meat fillings are a delicious alternative.

The famous Moroccan traveller Ibn Battûta of Tangier writes in his travelogue, *Rihla* (*Quest*), of his meeting in Crimea in 1332 with Öz Beg Khan, another descendant of Genghis Khan, ruler of the Golden Horde. Ibn Battûta may have been dazzled by the golden canopy over the khan's throne, but he was puzzled that "Turks" did not eat either bread or sweets. Used to the lavishness of Arab cuisine, he was dismissive of the plainness of the food on the khan's table. However, he does mention two pasta dishes. In one the pasta is cut into small pieces, perforated in the centre and cooked in boiling water. This is served in broth and eaten with yoghurt. The other is a soup made with pasta (*riştâ* or *erişte*), resembling, he says, *şehriye*, or vermicelli.

By the first half of the 15th century, when the Anatolian physician Mahmût Şirvanî translated al Bagdadî's *Book of Dishes* (*Kitabü't-tabîh*) into Turkish, the *ittriya* in al-Idrisi's 1150 Sicilian report had become *itriye* (or *etriye*). These fine strands of pasta eventually came to be known in Turkish as *şehriye* and were traded in dried form for use mainly in soups.

Two centuries later, the Ottoman traveller Evliyâ Çelebi, recording the procession of guilds in Istanbul in his *Book of Travels*, includes the *Esnaf-ı Şehriyeciyan*, the Guild of Vermicelli Makers. Their shops were installed on carriages adorned with tinsel and waxed paper, and as they passed by they advertised their goods with the cry "*Şehriye nefayis, canım*" (The vermicelli's delicious, darlings). The kitchen accounts of Topkapı Palace record that in the 16th and 17th centuries the yearly vermicelli consumption of the imperial household of nearly 10,000 people amounted to 252 *kile* (about 6.5 tons).

Today Italy's gargantuan pasta industry eclipses those of all other countries. Yet one should not forget that another pasta tradition has nourished generations of khans and steppe warriors and continues to flourish all the way from the Alps to the Altai Mountains.

Berrin Torolsan, bt@cornucopia.net. For cookery articles from past issues, see cornucopia.net/cookery

Uvmaç Çorbasi
Mince and Mint Soup

1 tablespoon butter
100g minced beef or lamb
Salt and pepper
2 rounded tablespoons plain white flour
2 teaspoons dried or chopped fresh mint

The diet of pastoral warlords, this is Central Asia's classic steppe soup, listed in Mahmud of Kashgar's 11th-century lexicon of Turkic dialects. The name comes from the action of crumbing dough with your fingers – *uvmak* or *ovmak* in Turkish means to rub. (It is sometimes spelt *oğmaç*.) The soup is soothing as well as nourishing. My mother used to cook it when I had a cold as a child. I still like it very much.

1 Melt the butter in a soup pan, stir-fry the meat until browned and crumbling, and season with salt and pepper.

2 Pour in 4 glasses of hot water, bring to the boil, then reduce the heat.

3 Meanwhile, spoon the flour onto a plate and moisten by mixing in just enough water (about 2 tablespoons) to give a fairly dry, crumbly dough.

4 Tear off tiny fragments of dough with your fingers and crumb them as you drop them into the boiling pan. When all the dough has been used up, turn the heat down, add the mint and cook for a further 5 minutes, until the smell of the flour disappears. The tender, plump pieces of dough will rise to the surface, and the soup will have thickened a little. Taste to season and serve piping hot.

Cevizli Erişte
Pasta with Cheese and Walnuts

2 glasses durum wheat flour
2 eggs
Salt
Extra flour for dusting
Butter
Mature 'kaşar' or cheddar cheese, grated
Walnuts, crushed

The oldest form of pasta, *erişte* is traditionally prepared in the countryside in huge quantities, with basketfuls of eggs, after the harvest in late summer. The women take it in turns to help each other prepare the household's *erişte*, turning it into a party with songs and jokes. The product of this shared labour is dried on clean sheets in an airy spot, or, in some regions, lightly baked dry to remove all the moisture, making it durable enough to last the winter without becoming mouldy. Durum wheat, which produces another winter staple, bulgur, is traditionally preferred. The *erişte* can also be simmered in less water to allow it to absorb all the cooking juices, like a pilav, which means that none of the goodness is wasted.

1 Knead a dough with the flour, a pinch of salt, the eggs and half a glass of water. If the dough is too firm, add more water sparingly; if too moist add flour. It should have the softness of an earlobe. Knead until elastic, shape it into a ball, and leave to stand at room temperature for an hour, covered with a damp tea towel.

2 Lightly dust a work surface with some extra flour and divide the dough into two balls.

3 Roll out one ball with a rolling pin to form a circular sheet of pasta one or two millimetres thick (old people say as thick as the blunt edge of a knife), then spread it out, without tearing it, on a clean surface to dry a little while you repeat the process with the second ball.

4 Lay the sheets of pasta on a flat surface and cut with a sharp knife into long strips about three fingers wide.

5 Dust these ribbons with extra flour and pile them neatly on top of each other.

6 Hold the stack down on the table with one hand, and with the other cut crosswise into slices the thickness of a matchstick (the uneven end bits are cut into smaller pieces either for soups or for immediate consumption).

7 Cook the pieces of *erişte* fresh in boiling salted water, or spread on clean tea towels to dry for later use.

8 Serve tossed with butter and a generous helping of cheese and walnuts.

Tutmaç
Pasta with Yoghurt

2 glasses plain white flour
Salt
1 egg
2 heaped tablespoons butter
250g minced beef
1 or 2 cloves garlic, crushed (optional)
Natural yoghurt

This widespread recipe is simple and filling. It could be found everywhere, from the sultan's table to a soldier's daily ration. Countless regional variations exist, from country to country, even village to village, but the basic method and the name have remained unchanged for a thousand years. The dish is also known as *yoğurtlu hamur*, literally pasta with yoghurt. This version is how my grandmother used to prepare it. It is ideal for a leisurely lunch in the holidays – a long siesta is very welcome afterwards. A "false" *tutmaç* can be also prepared with *farfalle* pasta – not exactly the same, but still rewarding.

1 Prepare a dough with the flour, a pinch of salt, the egg and water, knead until it is elastic, and gather into a ball. Leave to rest, covered with a damp tea towel. Divide the dough into two balls and roll each out into a thin sheet as in the previous *erişte* recipe.

2 When the two sheets are ready, dust the work surface again and lay the first sheet of pasta onto it. With a long knife, cut it into strips two fingers wide, then crosswise into squares. The squares should not be too large as they swell when cooking.

3 In a deep pan, bring plenty of water to the boil with a tablespoon of salt.

4 With your index finger and thumb, pinch together two opposing corners of each square to form bow shapes (see previous pages).

5 Drop the pasta into the boiling water. When it has come to the boil again, reduce the heat and stir from time to time to prevent it sticking. Fresh pasta cooks quickly, so taste it after five minutes – it should be cooked through and the centre should not be hard. Transfer with a slotted spoon onto a serving dish, spooning over some of the cooking liquid to keep it moist and warm. Repeat the process with the second sheet of pasta.

6 Melt the butter in a frying pan and stir-fry the mince with salt until all the juice has been absorbed and the meat crumbles.

7 If garlic is being used, blend the crushed garlic into the yoghurt.

8 Serve the pasta on warmed plates, topped with yoghurt and a spoonful of fried mince. Serve the rest of the meat and yoghurt separately for people to help themselves.

Kesme
Fresh Pasta Ribbons with White Cheese

2 glasses plain white flour
Salt
Wheat starch, or extra flour, to dust
Butter
White cheese or feta, crumbled

This pasta, made without eggs, is known in Turkish as *kesme*, which means "to cut" (just as *tagliatelle* means "cuttings"). It can be used fresh or dried – to allow the moisture to evaporate, the pasta ribbons are traditionally draped over canes or hazel sticks, or simply spread out in a breezy spot on clean bed sheets.

1 Mix the flour to a dough with water and a pinch of salt. Knead until elastic and leave to rest.

2 Roll the dough out into thin sheets and dust with wheat starch (or the extra flour). Fold in half, then roll into a tube, starting at the folded side. Slice the tube crosswise into pieces about a finger thick. When finished, unroll the ribbons and place on a clean surface.

3 Leave the pasta to dry for at least an hour before cooking it in boiling salted water.

4 Serve in bowls, spooning over some of the cooking liquid, toss with melted butter and top generously with cheese.

Manti
Beef Dumplings

2 glasses plain white flour
1 egg
Salt
100g minced beef
1 small onion, grated
Parsley, chopped finely
Salt and pepper
Olive oil
Natural yoghurt
2 cloves garlic
Butter
Red paprika flakes (medium hot)

There is an infinite variety of *mantı*. The basics are identical, with only small differences in the making of the dough. For example, a *mantı* from Bosnia in the Balkans, known as *Boşnak mantısı*, contains no egg: the dough is made pliable by adding oil, and then stretched after being rolled out, like strudel dough, before being cut into the squares that envelope the filling. And from the East comes the Uighur *mantı* of Turkestan, in which the filling is spicier and the hand-minced mutton less lean. In this case, the dough is not rolled out but rolled between the palms into a long cylinder about two fingers thick. This is then sliced crosswise into little rounds, which are flattened and folded into neatly filled bundles and steamed. The recipe below is from Kayseri in the heart of Anatolia, somewhere between Bosnia and Turkestan.

1 Prepare the dough with the flour, egg, a pinch of salt and water and leave to rest.

2 Prepare the filling by combining the beef, onion, parsley, pepper and salt, mix well with a spoon and set aside.

3 Roll out the dough. With a sharp knife, cut first lengthwise into ribbons two fingers thick, then crosswise into squares.

4 With a teaspoon, place small amounts of the filling into the centre of each square and pinch the four corners together to seal in the filling.

5 Bring water to the boil in a deep pan with salt and a spoonful of olive oil.

6 Transfer the prepared *mantı* to the pan and cook gently, stirring from time to time to stop them from sticking.

7 Pound the garlic with a little salt and mix with the yoghurt.

8 When the dumplings come to the surface and are cooked, serve without delay, with the garlic yoghurt poured over and a drizzle of melted paprika butter.

Nohutlu Manti
Chickpea Dumplings

2 glasses plain white flour
2 eggs
Salt
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 glass chickpeas, previously cooked
600ml beef stock
Butter
Tomato purée
Natural yoghurt
1 clove garlic (optional)

With protein-rich chickpeas, this is a perfect vegetable dish from the old Ottoman capital of Bursa – vegetarians can use a vegetable stock. This recipe is taken from the book *Bursa Mutfağı* (*Bursa Cuisine*) by M Ömür Akkor, who says this *mantı* is prepared in large quantities in summer, dried and stored in linen bags to be enjoyed in winter. My grandmother, who grew up in Bursa, used to cook it fresh and peel the chickpeas. I was about ten the last time she made it and I have never forgotten it.

1 Prepare the dough with the flour, eggs, salt and olive oil.

2 Roll out the pasta and cut into equal squares two fingers across.

3 Place a chickpea in the centre of each square and pinch the corners to seal it, leaving the sides partially open to trap the sauce (see picture).

4 Arrange the *mantı* neatly on a baking tray and bake until golden.

5 Heat the stock, pour over the *mantı* and simmer on the stove, covered, until all the broth is absorbed.

6 Melt the butter and mix with the tomato purée.

7 Serve the *mantı* hot, with plain (or garlic) yoghurt poured over. The tomato-flavoured melted butter should be served separately in a warmed sauceboat to drizzle over the yoghurt.

Su Böreği
Savoury Pastry with Pasta Dough

4 glasses plain white flour
Salt
4 eggs
Butter (melted)
Filling:
200g white cheese or feta, crumbled
Fresh parsley, finely chopped
Fresh dill, finely chopped
1 egg

Thin sheets of pasta give a silky texture to this savoury pastry, which resembles lasagne yet is different and more straightforward. In his *Turkish Cookery Book*, published in England in 1864, Turabi Efendi describes "Sù Bùrèghi" as "a noted pastry in Turkey" that will be found "light and agreeable". However, it takes expertise to handle the boiling of large sheets of pasta. All the pastry shops in Istanbul sell homemade *su böreği* by the kilo.

This recipe is adapted from the cookery book *Melceü't-Tabbâhîn* (*The Shelter of the Cooks*), written by the gourmet judge Mehmet Kâmil in 1844. He explains that the best way to cook this *börek* is not in an oven, but in a pastry tray over embers. When the bottom is cooked, the *börek* is turned upside down (with the help of a second large tray placed over the pastry), to cook the other side. This recipe will make about eight servings.

1 Knead a dough with the flour, salt and eggs (but no water). Cut into 12 pieces and roll them out into large circles about a millimetre thick. Reserving two circles (one for the top, one for the bottom), boil the other 10, one at a time, in a large pan of salted water. Remove, drain and pat dry with a clean cloth.

2 Prepare the filling by blending all the ingredients – cheese, parsley, dill and the egg – in a bowl.

3 Take one of the uncooked pasta sheets and spread it over the bottom of a buttered tray and brush the surface with butter. Arrange a layer of parboiled pasta on top, smoothing the creases to fit. Brush with melted butter and repeat with a second pasta sheet and so on.

4 On the fifth pasta sheet spread the cheese filling to cover and continue adding the remaining five sheets, brushing each one with butter. Finish by covering with the second sheet of uncooked pasta.

5 Brush the top with butter and bake until golden.

Chickpea 'manti', or dumplings, plumped up after slowly being simmered in stock

Şehriye Çorbası
Chicken Soup with Vermicelli

2 glasses chicken stock
2 tablespoons vermicelli
Salt and pepper
Chopped parsley to garnish
Half a lemon cut into wedges

A light and appetising soup. Traditionally, chopped chicken liver is also added, which makes it even tastier.

As well as vermicelli, small pasta used in soup come in several different shapes: the finely cut, thread-like strands of *tel şehriye* are the classic, but grain-shaped *arpa* (or the Italian *orzo*) or star-shaped *yıldız şehriye*, or *stelline*, are also popular. Since a thicker version of this soup is a common nursery food in Turkey, letter and animal shapes are also available.

1 Bring the stock to the boil, add the vermicelli, reduce the heat and leave to simmer until it is tender and has expanded. Add salt and pepper to taste.

2 Serve very hot, sprinkled with fresh parsley, and with lemon wedges to squeeze over the soup for extra tang.

Şehriyeli Pilav
Vermicelli Pilav

2 tablespoons olive oil
Handful of vermicelli (any kind)
1½ glasses rice, rinsed
4 glasses hot water
Salt
Butter

When Süleyman the Magnificent's two youngest sons, the Princes Beyazıt and Cihangir, were circumcised in 1539, the festivities and banquets lasted for two weeks. The lavish menu included an endless succession of different pilavs, among them *dane-i şehriyye*, "vermicelli pilav". We don't know if this was made with vermicelli and rice, or vermicelli on its own. Poultry is often served on a bed of vermicelli alone, simmered in chicken stock until all the moisture is absorbed. This recipe, however, combines the two. The white rice grains with the sprinkling of brown vermicelli makes it very appealing.

1 Heat the olive oil and fry the vermicelli until it turns hay-coloured. Add the rice and keep stirring a little longer to blend well.

2 Pour over the hot water, season with salt and bring to the boil, then turn the heat down to a minimum and simmer, covered.

3 When all the liquid has been absorbed, dot the surface of the pilav with the butter, cover and leave, undisturbed, for about 20 minutes to allow the rice grains to expand further.

4 Serve hot as a side dish with roasts or stews. It is also delicious by itself with a good salad.

Fırın Makarnası
Baked Macaroni

500g tube-shaped pasta
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons plain white flour
1/2 litre milk
Salt and white pepper
3 eggs
100g white cheese or feta, crumbled
100g mature kaşar or cheddar, grated

Even the very grand Mahmut Nedim bin Tosun says he cannot deny that *makaronya* is delicious. In his 1898 cookery book, *Aşçıbaşı* (*The Chef*), he gives a recipe for a simpler version of this baked pasta, without white sauce or eggs. The recipe here, made with shop-bought pasta, is my aunt's and it is a winner, undeniably delicious. Red wine is a good accompaniment.

1 Boil the pasta in plenty of salted water, according to the instructions on the packet, and strain.

2 In a separate pan cook a roux, or *miyane*, stirring the butter and flour until it is foaming. Add the cold milk gradually and keep stirring until the sauce thickens. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Remove from the heat and leave to cool a little so that the eggs won't scramble.

3 Beat the eggs and whisk into the sauce. Stir in the white cheese or feta and blend.

4 Transfer the boiled pasta to a deep mixing bowl, add three-quarters of the sauce and mix with the pasta, making sure every piece is coated.

5 Transfer the mixture to a baking dish. Spread the remaining sauce over the top and sprinkle with the grated cheese.

6 Bake in a moderate oven for about 20 minutes, until the cheese melts and the top turns a lovely golden brown. ◆

Recipes are for four or five servings.
A glass takes about 175g/6oz of flour.

Village Voices

Azize Ethem emerges from a wintry sea of mud to excitement over new archaeological finds – a Roman basilica and a mosaic floor – and local-election candidates wooing voters with lemonade and cakes. A trip to Iznik market, meanwhile, turns up those deliciously sweet little Turkish bananas

Ditches and archaeology have been the order of the day this winter. Iznik hasn't had a sewerage system since the days of the Roman Empire. Septic tanks have been the norm, so when the mayor announced last autumn that the town was to get a sewerage system serving every house, few were impressed. I don't think any of us had the wit to foresee the total chaos we would be subjected to. Every street and back lane was dug up. The mud was indescribable. Elderly people loath to attempt ditch-jumping had to cross bridges made of wobbly boards, and sales of wellington boots must have gone sky high.

Local treasure-hunters were out in all weathers, monitoring the conduits as they were dug. Ditch-watching is a serious business in a town where rich pickings can lie only a few feet under the surface. Years ago Menekşe's uncle came to visit Selim to ask if the large yellow lump of metal in his hand was gold. Having spied something glinting as a backhoe dug a trench, he had slipped back after dark to retrieve it. It was gold. Four hundred and seventy-five grams of the finest gold, melted down and hidden sometime in the distant past. It was just the thing a day labourer with eight children needed to change the course of his family's life. What riches were discovered by the treasure-hunters this time I have no idea, but am sure there are Iznikians with a new spring in their step.

With machines tearing up the roads, it goes without saying that there will be archaeological finds of varying significance necessitating the rerouting of the trench. A Roman road was revealed – which is hardly surprising – but the discovery of a mosaic palace floor was a major discovery. Füsun Hanım, a local retired archaeologist, tells me that a mosaic face one metre in diameter was uncovered. The find was deemed so important that it was immediately covered over.

Unrelated to the roadworks was the unearthing of an impressively large tumulus at the Iznik necropolis on the road to Elbeyli. And early this year it was announced that a large Roman basilica had been revealed in the lake, 20 meters from the shore, close to the marina. It had first been picked up by an aerial photography team. The great excitement brought out museum officials, Culture and Tourism Ministry bigwigs, archaeologists and a professional diving team. Researchers now tell us it is nearly 1,600 years old, built in the 4th and 5th centuries to a plan similar to Iznik's Haghia Sophia Church. It is the Church of St Neophytos, who at 16, in the year 303, was tortured and killed by Roman soldiers. The church, built where he was martyred, was a place of early Christian pilgrimage until it was destroyed in an earthquake 400 years later.

Of course, all this could have been discovered decades ago if the experts in their ivory towers would lower themselves to spend a few hours talking to the locals. For generations local children have not swum in that area because it was said to be the site of Christian graves. And graves have indeed been found. So full marks to local folklore, none to the authorities.

> *'The large Roman basilica in the lake... could have been discovered decades ago if the experts in their ivory towers would lower themselves to spend a few hours talking to the locals'*

Along with mud and ancient artefacts we have had local elections. Iznik had eight candidates, so the bunting and vehicles blaring music and slogans reached new heights. Several gentlemen took me aside to explain that Selim always voted for their party and so they were sure I would do the same. I know Selim was special but I am pretty sure he didn't have four votes. One candidate had a team handing out cakes and lemonade, while another wooed us with ballpoint pens. Is accepting a biro tantamount to accepting a bribe, I wonder?

Our old mayor, who was admired for never doing anything to upset the status quo, had blotted his copybook with the winter sea of mud. The contender who runs a really ship-shape town nearby didn't have a hope; living eight kilometres from Iznik made him a foreign usurper. And three others had really insignificant little election vehicles roaming the streets, so that ruled them out. The defeated candidates are now insinuating the victor handed out cash for votes. There is no such thing as a good loser in Iznik politics.

I am just home from an excursion to the Iznik market. The 24-kilometre drive along the lakeshore is a relaxing trip, apart from the road through Boyalıca, where stray dogs and the elderly seem oblivious of oncoming vehicles. Turning into the main street of Iznik I encountered a traffic jam with half a dozen vehicles in front of me slowed to a crawl. At the head of the procession were two ancient gentlemen (probably from Boyalıca) with walking sticks, ambling along in the middle of the road. No horns were sounded as the drivers waited for them to reach their destination. It is little events like this that I can't imagine happening anywhere but in a Turkish country town.

First I had lunch with friends who were in town, and then it was off to the fruit and vegetable market where each of us has our own favourite stalls. Although it is a huge market, with over a hundred stalls, I always have to search for Turkish bananas. Small and sweet, they have far more taste than the big unblemished imported ones, and the aroma of strawberries was everywhere. In London, when I shop for my daughter, Sara, the fruit is packed, wrapped and anonymous. Here I can find mini-mountains labelled *tarla* (field), meaning the fruit is grown in a field and not in one of those plastic tunnel things.

With the groceries crossed off the list I set off back home. Here, on the edge of the lake, I found Mehmet's wife and four of her friends chatting as they weeded between the rows of flowering bean plants. The village women have a labour-sharing system. Mehmet's family will owe each of these women a day's work, with no money changing hands. Mehmet, meanwhile, is wading in the lake, checking his fish traps. He would die of shame if he realised I have a clear view of him splashing around in his underpants.

Fatih is mowing the lawn in a herringbone pattern, which he considers most attractive. I think it looks a bit odd, but who am I to voice an opinion? My one-day-a-week gardener brooks no criticism, but he is so reliable and honest that I can live with his eccentricities.

Tomorrow they will all have moved on to chores elsewhere and I will once again be alone with the frog chorus and birdsong. ◆

Azize Ethem is the author of 'Beyond the Orchard' (Çitlembik), available from cornucopia.net at £9.99

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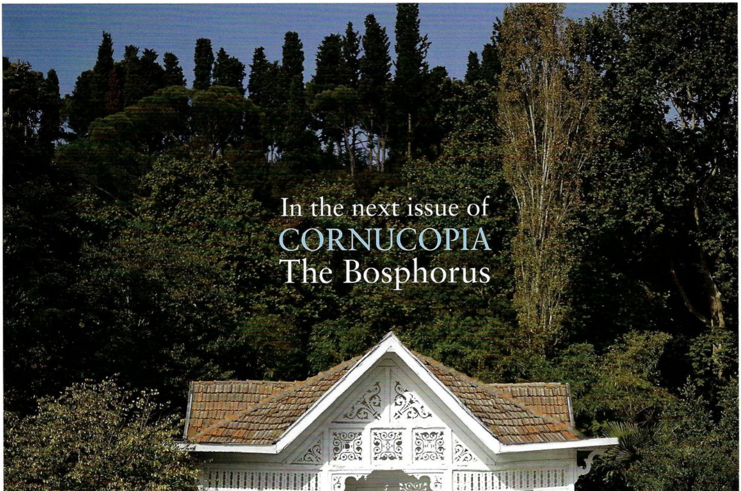

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THE EUROPEAN CITY
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ISSUE 52
THE BOSPHORUS

In the next issue: part three of our Istanbul Unwrapped guide sails up the Bosphorus and out to the Princes Islands. No 50 explored the Old City and the Golden Horn, No 51 reveals the European City. For the complete picture, order all three at cornucopia.net

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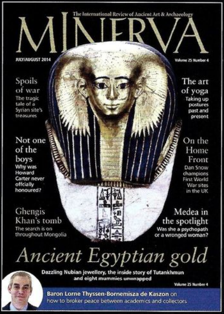
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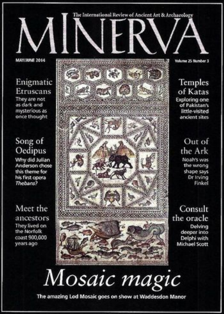
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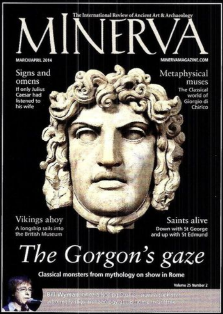
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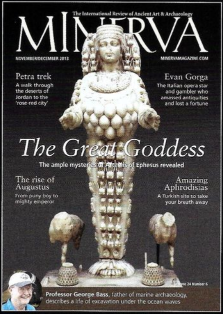
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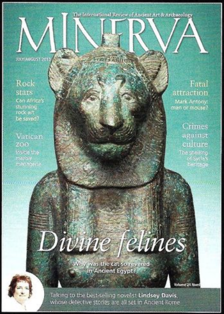
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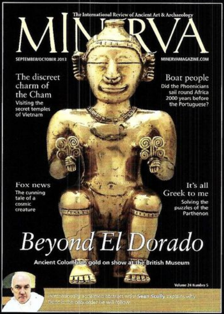
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Choice morsels

You could work up an appetite simply picking a restaurant for dinner in today's Istanbul, such is the array of styles, genres and cuisines on offer. Keeping his options open, Andrew Finkel samples the fare at three of the city's most creative, genre-bending establishments

It was a time-honoured Istanbul dilemma that surfaced every time the question of where to go out for dinner came up. It was posed very simply. "Meat or fish?" Of course fish didn't just refer to slippery, cold-blooded vertebrates that breathed through gills, and meat wasn't simply meat. Both were shorthand for competing rituals.

The first was a meal cultivated by the former Greek communities up the Bosphorus (where they caught fish). It began with meze, was lubricated with anis-scented rakı and finished with a plate of seasonal fruit. Meat did, of course, mean meat – chunks of lamb baked in a clay oven, but more often beef or lamb turned into shish or meatballs and grilled over charcoal. Meat restaurants sprang up in the new suburban housing developments along the Sea of Marmara – which was also en route to the abattoir. Unlike fish, meat required something more toothsome and calorific to finish – something covered with sugary syrup or clotted buffalo cream. As for vegetarians… I am referring to an age when they didn't exist.

This was a time when Istanbul families went out to dinner to eat things that were just too troublesome to cook at home. Frying fish in a brand-new apartment building was antisocial and inconvenient. Grilling over an open fire would rouse the fire brigade. There was the odd supper club or hotel dining room serving more European fare, but the fact that they served meat *and* fish meant there was something affected about them, alien and not quite right.

That age is long past. Shopping malls have pizzerias and sushi bars; there are chains of brasseries with eclectic menus that turn into nightclubs after ten o'clock. And the enigma of where to eat out at night has become far more complex. It is no longer a question of eating food you couldn't imagine cooking in a domestic kitchen but of food whose preparation requires patience and skill and which you couldn't imagine at all. Istanbul still has its genre restaurants but suddenly there are restaurants that are bending those genres (genre-benre-ing?). They even serve duck. Whereas once you might go out just to reassure yourself that the food you got at home was better, now you go to be intimidated.

There is a thin line, however, between the creative and the pretentious, and I would definitely place **Gile** in the former category. This is a small, elegant restaurant in the Akaretler neighbourhood of Beşiktaş, opposite the W Hotel. The starched linen on the table contrasts with rough, lime-washed walls. There are also huge oils, modern mantras by the sufic jazz musician Mercan Dede, but the principal decoration is a wine cabinet which occupies one whole side of the room. It all suggests seriousness of purpose rather than obeisance to fashion. The food takes its notes from Turkish traditions and ingredients, but is very purposefully constructed into structures on the plate.

> *'It is no longer a question of eating food you couldn't imagine cooking at home, but of food you couldn't imagine at all'*

And the flavours are subtle. Too often "new Turkish cuisine" means borrowing broad Mediterranean flavours of tomato and olive oil. Steak here comes with a delicate patchwork of thin Amasya apple confit and splashes of a date and rose cream. A rich chocolate fondant has a dusting of paprika and a scoop of hot red pepper flake ice cream. There is a good wine list and attentive waiters who explain what you are eating with the earnestness of a pupil determined to come first in the class. The chefs, Cihan Kıpçak and Üryan Doğmuş, are young veterans of some of Istanbul's most upscale restaurants and here they have had the opportunity to develop a style all their own. There are quibbles – the *amuse-bouches* are the wrong side of spectacular. If you serve them at all it should be not just to whet the appetite but to excite expectations of what the kitchen can do. But, all in all, Gile is a landmark in a crowded Istanbul scene. And better still, it is comfortable and quiet – a place where you remember both the food and the conversation.

I have had two invitations to lunch from Ayşem Saraçoğlu, who manages the up-scale **Frankie** (rhymes with "swanky") and have returned for dinner under my own steam. It occupies a high perch on top of the Sofa Hotel in Nişantaşı and, for a neighbourhood that looks in on itself, enjoys a pretty impressive view. The name is a tribute to Frank Sinatra, apparently, and the restaurant thus inspired has a reassuring, almost old-fashioned air of a crooned rendition of *New York, New York*. It is a haunt as much as a restaurant – a bar, a club, with an outdoor refuge for people who smoke and a romantic terrace with sofas wide enough for sleeping off the effects of the exotic cocktails. There is often live music after 10pm and the Turkish singer-songwriter Sezen Aksu is listed as creative director.

At the same time, Frankie takes its food seriously. The chef, Symeon Triantafyllou, has cooked his way around the Mediterranean Basin from Spain to Greece and the *mise en place* is bright and cheerful. There is also a ferociously competent sommelier, Serdar Kömbe, who helps İsa Bal, the Turkish-origin sommelier at The Fat Duck train for international competition. I enjoyed my steak tartare. I have yet to sample the braised cheek of veal, which would appear to be the signature dish. There is the odd bit of regional fusion, such as vine leaf and Chardonnay soup, but in the main part this is international cuisine with local notes. If Gile is the gastronomic equivalent of Nuri Bilge Ceylan – an attempt to introduce Turkish themes into a highbrow Northern European tradition – Frankie is Ol' Blue Eyes singing 'Never on a Sunday'. It sets out to entertain.

Meyhanes are the downmarket version of the Bosphorus fish restaurant, and **Yeni Lokanta** (the New Canteen) is a good example of what I call the modern meyhane – an attempt to breathe new life into the same-old-same-old meze tradition. There is a danger in innovation. When, for example, does a gastropub come out of the closet to admit it's no longer a public house but wants to be a bistro? I think Yeni Lokanta has probably made the mental adjustment to realise it has severed its meze roots. For a start, you are not tempted to drink rakı with its array of "small plates". You can order the meze in "sets" of three that appear to provide a foil of contrasting tastes, but each one is a self-contained dish in its own right. Meze don't make sense on

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their own – you can't have the sweet melon without the salty cheese; the oil of a braised vegetable needs the crisp sharp tang of an arugula salad. Even if Yeni Lokanta calls them meze, these are really hors d'oeuvres.

Not that they weren't tasty. Curiously, the most pleasing dish to my non-Turkish guest was the simplest – grilled meatballs which, despite being kneaded with haloumi cheese and served with warm potato salad, were not much different from what you would get in any köfte restaurant. The mantı-dumplings filled with dried aubergine shells instead of meat was an intense savoury dish. Fried courgette flowers with yoghurt looks and sounds delicious but, alas, courgette flowers don't actually have much flavour.

Main dishes were a slight disappointment. Octopus was a bit squishy and the oven-braised beef ribs were satisfying but not exceptional. All of this sounds ungracious. A lot of thought has gone into Yeni Lokanta – the decor has a comfortable 1950s feel, with a patterned encaustic-tiled floor and green glass lights hanging low over the tables, giving it the homely air of a Dutch café. Service is pleasant, the room is bustling and busy and not so crowded you can't talk. There is a good selection of wine from the new crop of Turkish small producers. If it were your local gastropub, you'd feel yourself more than blessed. However, it is located at the Tünel end of Beyoğlu which, come to think of it, is where a meyhane ought to be.

None of the above are cheap by Istanbul standards, although with a bit of care, you can eat at Yeni Lokanta more reasonably. There is a tasting menu at Gile for TL170 – or TL270 paired with wine. Perhaps the next Istanbul dilemma is not meat or fish, but how much to spend. ◆

Gile *Akaretler Sıraevleri E Blok 14, Şair Nedim Cad, Beşiktaş, Istanbul; daily 11.30am–3.30pm (bistro menu), 7pm–11am, closed Sun; +90 212 327 1166, gilerestaurant.com*
Frankie *The Sofa Hotel, Teşvikiye Cad 41, Nişantaşı, Istanbul; daily 12 noon–3pm, 7pm–2am; +90 212 230 6666, frankieistanbul.com*
Yeni Lokanta and Bar *Kumbaracı Yokuşu 66, Beyoğlu, Istanbul; from 7.30am (breakfast), 12–4pm, 6–10.30pm, closed Sun; +90 212 2922550, lokantayeni.com*

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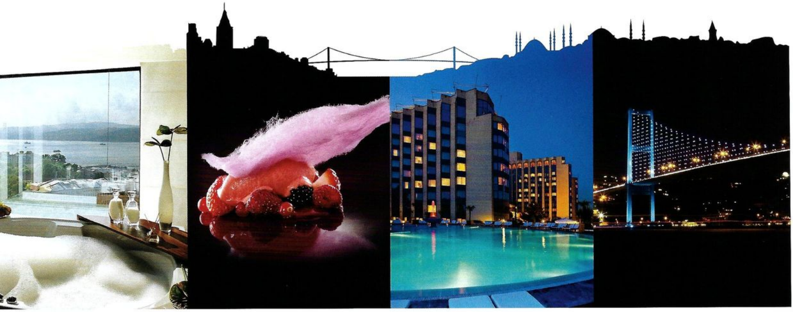

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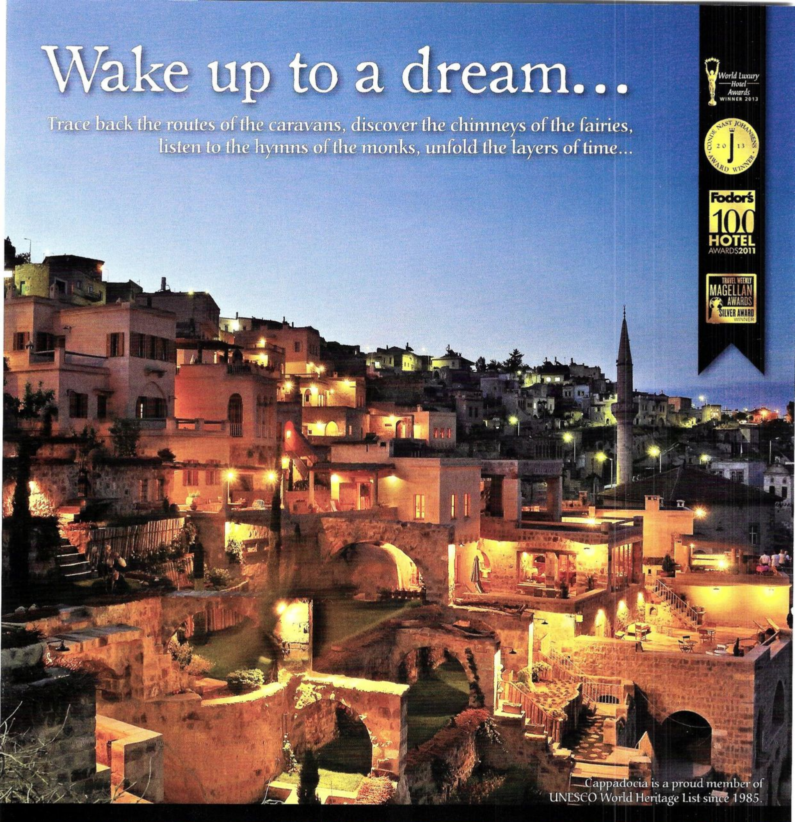

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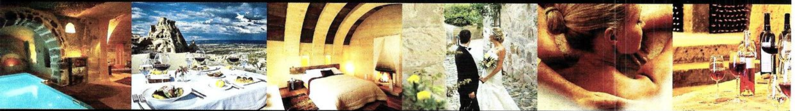

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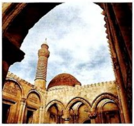

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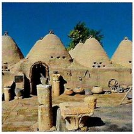

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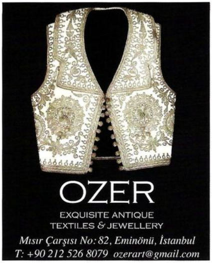

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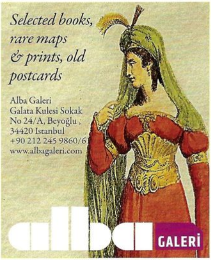

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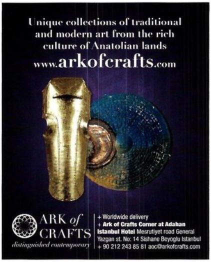

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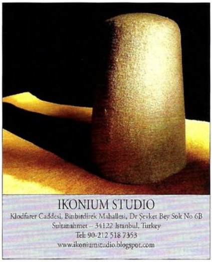

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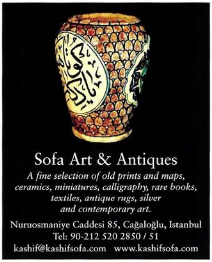

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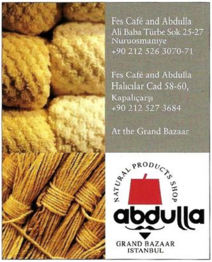

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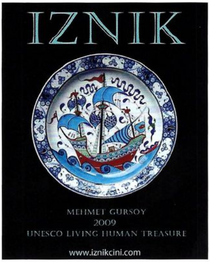

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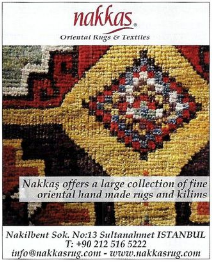

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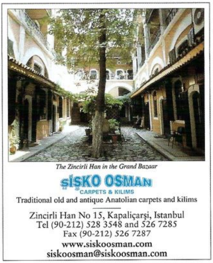

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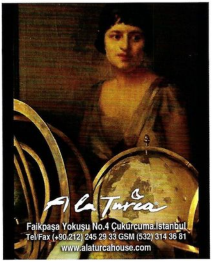

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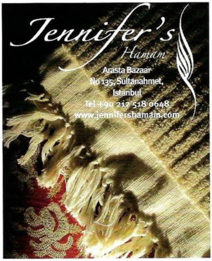

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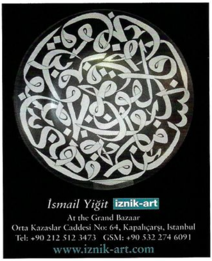

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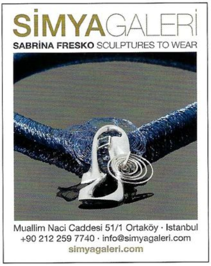

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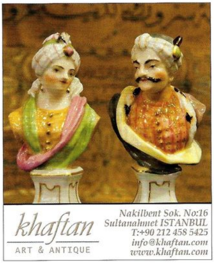

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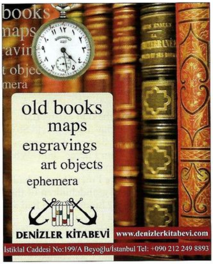

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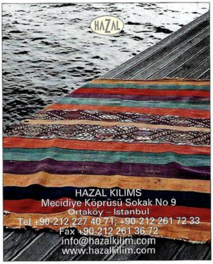

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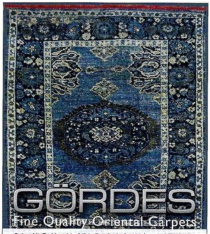
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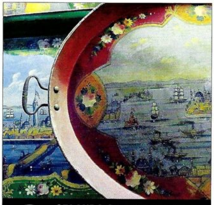
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Sole survivor

Andrew Finkel on the late David Stoliar (1922–2014), who survived the sinking of the Struma

In 2000 I stepped into the lift of a Bologna hotel and in the minute or two it took to reach the lobby I became firm friends with one of my fellow passengers. Her name was Marda Stoliar and she was the wife of David Stoliar, a man whose extraordinary life had figured in a story I had written for *The Times* earlier that summer (she had spotted my name on the conference badge I was wearing). As a 19-year-old in 1941, David Stoliar had managed to bribe his way out of a fascist work camp in his native Romania to book a passage to Palestine for himself and his fiancée's family aboard a leaky Danube cattle-boat called the Struma. The ship never arrived in Palestine.

The Struma had started life some 75 years earlier on the Tyne as a luxury steam yacht, commissioned by the Marquess of Anglesey. It had bounced up and down on waves of fortune, much like the once-prosperous Stoliar family, and it was as a refugee-carrier crammed with 780 passengers and 11 crew that it was to end its life – a Greek-owned ship flying a Panamanian flag and charging the vast fee of a $1000 a berth.

On December 14, 1941, the Struma sputtered into Istanbul. It had been plagued by engine trouble for the whole journey. The British, determined to restrict immigration to its mandate colony, put pressure on the Turkish authorities not to let the boat be repaired or the passengers to move on to Palestine. Ankara was itself all too willing to prevent its neutral territory from becoming a transit route. So the Struma was held in quarantine at a mooring below the Topkapı until, eventually, the police boarded the boat, cut the anchor and towed the disabled ship back up to the Black Sea to be set adrift.

On February 24, 1942, David Stoliar was opening the door to the captain's deck when a Soviet torpedo hit the Struma. He was still clutching the handle when the door flew into the sea. Throughout the night, on his makeshift raft, he heard the shouts of his fellow passengers. By morning there was silence. He was the only one to survive.

Most of us suffer the odd existential tightening of the stomach. For David Stoliar, the knot could never be untied. The question was not just "Why am I here?" but "Why was I the one to be spared?"

The summer before I met Marda I had written of one of the grandchildren of the Struma victims, Greg Buxton, who had sold his home to finance a team of divers to seek out the ship at the bottom of the sea. If the sinking of the Struma had been a terrible triumph of pragmatism over compassion, this attempt to salvage its memory was proving similarly shameful. The authorities were wary of helping to commemorate an incident that showed Turkey, no less than Britain and the former-Soviet Union, in so unflattering a light. A former Turkish foreign minister openly declared that the motive of the divers was to stir up trouble.

The Struma was never found. A memorial service was held at sea, but David Stoliar did not attend. Marda was to explain to me that he had been anxious and embarrassed at the thought of appearing before the families as the one who had survived. Indeed, he had been married once before and never told his first wife of the Struma. Marda only found out by accident, when curiosity led her to research the war archives in the New York Public Library. She kept her discovery to herself, waiting for him to break his silence. Even then, there were things Stoliar never talked of. When Greg Buxton came to visit their home in Bend, Oregon, she stood in the kitchen doorway, afraid to break the spell, as David recounted for the first time in her hearing details of the night the Struma sank.

David Stoliar was to speak publicly on the Struma in an interview for the book, *Death on the Black Sea*. We met when he came to Turkey with Marda on a private visit in 2002, and I think he was genuinely surprised by the warmth of his reception. He was even reunited with İsmail Arslan who, as a young fisherman, had witnessed his rescue from the icy waters.

The following year I was invited to lecture in Portland and was flattered and astonished that Stoliar drove for hours from Bend to attend. We had a delightful dinner together. He was a modest, articulate and elegant man with a successful career and varied interests. That he had survived one of the bleakest moments of his century was no longer something he buried in his psyche. His delivery from despair had become a symbol of hope. That too was a burden, but David Stoliar bore it thoughtfully and with humour.

David Stoliar, soldier, businessman and lone survivor of the Struma, b. October 31, 1922, Chișinău (now Moldavia, then Kishinev Romania), d. May 18, 2014, Bend, Oregon, peacefully after a long illness.

Death on the Black Sea: The Untold Story of the Struma and World War II's Holocaust at Sea, by Douglas Frantz and Catherine Collins (London HarperCollins, 2003) is available as an ebook

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...and the prize goes to...

John Carswell introduces the mesmerising entries in this year's Ancient and Modern Prize for original research. The competition was hot – from edible diplomacy to Byzantine Buenos Aires – but the winner is the doyen of Asian tent studies

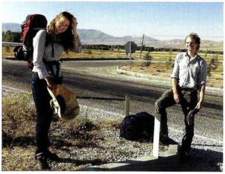
There were an astounding 29 submissions for the most recent Ancient and Modern prize. As usual, they were submitted to the anonymous judges, and when the results were collated there was unanimous agreement on the winner, Peter Andrews, whose application was exemplary. The choice of Harriet Rix for the Godfrey Goodwin Prize was also unanimous. As the judges never meet (there are no funds for this) there was no possibility of collusion.

Entrants must be under 26 or over 60, and it was a closely run race. If we had the resources, we would fund all the projects.

THE WINNERS

Dr Peter Alford Andrews, 71, received the first prize of £1000. His proposal was to visit Powis Castle in Wales and the Museo del Ejército in Toledo, to examine and record the tent of Tipu Sultan (1750–99) and the Tienda de Campaña (1535) – probably the oldest Indian tent in the world.

MÜGÜL ATAÇ



TOP PETER ANDREWS, WINNER OF THIS YEAR'S ANCIENT AND MODERN PRIZE, EXAMINES THE 18TH-CENTURY TENT OF THE INDIAN RULER TIPU SULTAN AT POWIS CASTLE IN WALES
LEFT HARRIET RIX WILL FOLLOW THE ROUTE OF THE TRAVELLER FRANCIS VERNON (1715–83)

Harriet Rix, 23, won the Godfrey Goodwin Prize worth £500. She is setting off in the footsteps of Francis Vernon, 17th-century botanist, astronomer, antiquarian, on the Turkish leg of his ill-fated voyage around Europe and the Ottoman and Safavid Empires.

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

Alex Baltazi, 77 The history and culture of the Levantines (migrant Westerners), and their contribution to the Ottoman Empire.
Pam J Crabtree, 61 Achaemenid ritual and feasting at the Kınık Höyük, in Cappadocia.
Viviana Delgado, 22 The undervalued role of the Ottoman Empire in the Renaissance and Enlightenment.
Christina DiFabio, 21 Fountains in public memory in Hellenistic and Roman Anatolia.
Pauline Dominik, 25 Rediscovering Polish life in 19th- and early-20th-century Istanbul.
Füsun Ertuğ, 61 The beauty, simplicity and diversity of Anatolian basketry and mat-making.
Matthew Elliott Gillman, 23 Ottoman ambition and the *Tarih-i Hind-i Garbi* (*History of the West Indies*), a 16th-century textual and art history curio.
Bruce Healy, 66 Sudden design appropriation of Khorasan to Caucasian carpets after 1722 and the Afghan conquest of Persia.
Sister Janet Hotine, 85 The East India Company's lucrative trade in jewels.
Rosalind Janssen, 61 Harriet Martineau's 1847 encounter with a female Theban mummy.
Michele Kidwell, 69 The transcendent beauty of the sculptures of Aphrodisias.
Lindsay Lochman, 61 Sacred ruins, landscapes and ancient sybils on Turkey's western coast.
Bernard McWilliams, 64, and Jennifer Gibbon, 63 The Hungry Archaeologist's Guide to Lycia: 118 archaeological sites and nearby restaurants.
Gérard J Maizou, 66, and Dr Katharina Müller, 63 The handicraft of *oya* (Turkish decorative edgings), a timeless fashion motif.
Lois Martin, 61 Net jaquars and rattlesnake skirts – interlinked fabrics in ancient Mexico.
Aimee Miles, 24 Maritime life and settlement in Hellenistic and Roman Lycia.
Clive Rogers, 64 The great hans of Istanbul – commercial gravitas in secular architecture.
Dr Geoffrey Roper, 72 The aesthetics of Ottoman printed books 1706–1922.
Daniel Schavelzon, 62 El Pórtico Bizantino: a mystery Byzantine building in Buenos Aires.
Dr Elizabeth W Shelton, 72 Rev Henry John van Lennep, 19th-century American missionary, Orientalist, artist.
Ulya Soley, 23 Aesthetic tradition and human representation in Kütahya ceramics.
Melissanthi Spei, 24 Folklore and fashion – social and cultural issues.
Dr Janet Starkey, 65 The Scottish physician brothers Alexander and Patrick Russell and *The Natural History of Aleppo* (published in 1756 and 1794).
Tunç Tayanç, 71 The history and development of the coffee cup, gleaned from literature, auction catalogues and paintings.
August Siena Thomas, 22 A cheese to keep the peace – edible diplomacy from Byzantium to the Republic of Turkey.
Gizem Tuğrul, 23 Disappearing traditional handicrafts in Mardin.
Susannah Worth, 61 The iconography of embroidered Ottoman Bindalli gowns. ◆

The Ancient and Modern Prize is sponsored by Cornucopia and Halı magazines, with contributions by Bonhams, Christie's and Sotheby's. Applicants must be under 26 or over 60. Apply at ancientandmodern.co.uk

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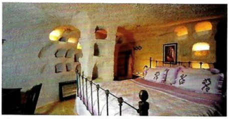

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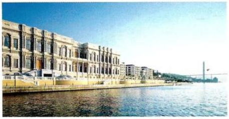

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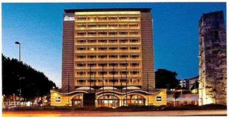

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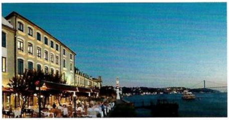

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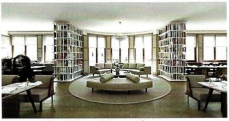

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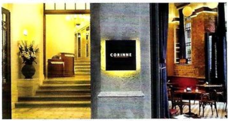

Corinne Hotel – Galatasaray

Conveniently located off Istiklal Caddesi in the Çukurcuma antiques district, the newly opened, 39-room Corinne is in a meticulously restored 100-year-old building. Rooms have every conceivable comfort: air-filtration system, heated floors, luxury bedding, even a pillow menu. Enjoy the sights and sounds of the neighbourhood in a hotel café serving delicious home-style meals all day.

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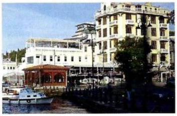

The House Hotel Bosphorus

Stylish waterside apartments overlooking a pretty square in Ortaköy, on the European shore of the Bosphorus. Built in the 1890s for the Balyans, a dynasty of imperial Ottoman architects, the apartements have now transformed into a luxury designer hotel. Most of the 23 rooms have balconies and stunning sea views. From the three rooftop suites, you see all the way from Topkapı Palace to the Bosphorus Bridge.

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The House Hotel Galatasaray

The attractive 1890s Zenovitch Apartments in Çukurcuma, Istanbul's atmospheric antiques district, was the first House Hotel when it opened in 2010. The historic townhouse is the ideal base to explore bohemian Beyoğlu. The conversion by Autoban retains many of its original features, including the elegant façade and marble staircase. There are 20 high-ceilinged suites, and a top-floor lounge bar with views over the Beyoğlu rooftops.

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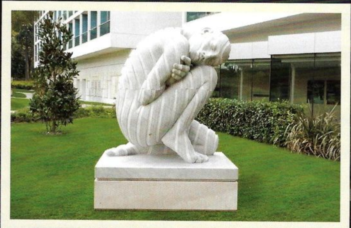
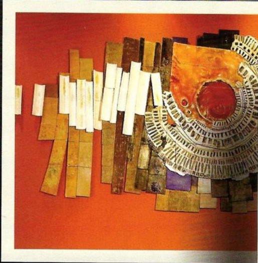


Lorenzo Quinn

Attila Galatalı



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